Photoshop Creative ISSUE THREE TREADING WATER

FILTERS | STYLES | BRUSHES | PHOTO EDITING | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS Free CD inside

NEW!

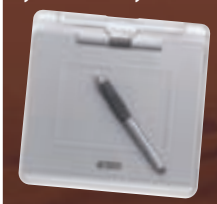
Photoshop creative

The only monthly Adobe® Photoshop® dedicated magazine

Inside

Free prints!
Enter our great competition and win a free canvas print of your photos or art

Wacom Graphire4
Discover if this entry-level graphics tablet can boost your creativity



Cut out and keep
Use the Fluid Mask plug-in for quick and easy cutouts

Revamp your photos
Squeeze new life from old photos by giving them the vector look

Behind the mask
Learn what masks do and why you should use them

Watercolour landscapes

Create the cover – page 30

Improve your best landscape photos by turning them into stunning watercolours – full guide inside

50 pages of creative tutorials inside

Free CD-ROM!
- 50 Mac and PC fonts
- 30 Royalty-free photos
- 150 Creative brushes
- Texture & patterns

and much more

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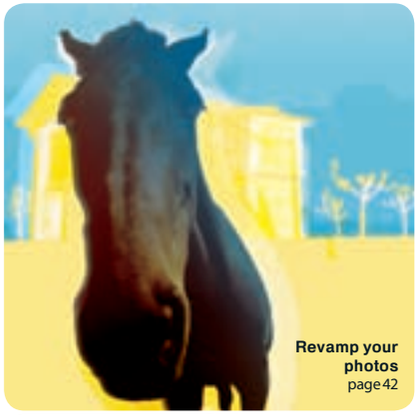
eMag™

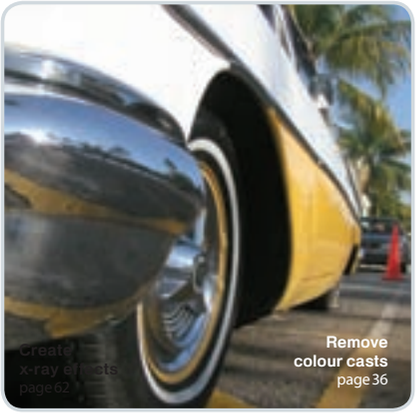
Welcome

A glimpse of what's in store this issue…



Mission Statement

Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we promise to always give you the best selection of resources to help improve your Photoshop skills. Whether it's in-depth guides to tools and techniques, or showing how to create a work of digital art, we'll make sure the information you get is accurate and informative. We want you to get the optimum Photoshop experience, and have as much fun using the program as we do putting the magazine together.



You only have to use the Photoshop software for a few minutes to realise its potential. There's a mountain of features and options to discover and decide how to use in new and exciting ways to create the type of digital art you want. Although its name lends itself to the photo-editing market, the truth is you could never touch a photo and still get your money's worth from Photoshop. This issue we decided to look at one way in which the program is used – in the field of illustration. Armed with a graphics tablet and some imagination, artists are using the software to create jaw-dropping illustrations, and we showcase three of the most exciting in our special feature. See what tools they use to turn Photoshop into an illustrative hub. But if you don't want to forget about your photo editing just yet, we have plenty of tips for using the software to improve photos, we continue our digital painting odyssey with a look at Art Deco, and we have plenty of practical advice for using Photoshop's tools.

We've been overwhelmed with the entries to our Readers' Challenge, so a huge thank you to everyone who has sent something in. Please keep them coming – we love to see what you come up with and if we like it enough, might even commission you to write a tutorial!

Jo Cole **Editor**
jo.cole@imagine-publishing.co.uk

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Copyright of Derek Bacon

Creative hub
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Exhibit
Artist showcase

Four pages dedicated to some of the entries to our Readers' Challenge. If you think you can do better, prove it!

Advice centre
Your questions answered

Get to the route of all image-editing evil here. And don't forget to send us your troublesome photos

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tutorials

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Creative Forum

We want to know what you think! So send us your opinion on the magazine, creativity or the Photoshop software in general

Version vex

New mag. all about Photoshop – just what I needed. Then I started to do the Van Gogh tutorial. I couldn't find the Pencil in Photoshop 7. Is it there or is it in CS? I then tried the Duotone tutorial. Again first step breaks down as the instructions appear to be wrong for Photoshop 7. Still I did manage to get the job done by going to Image>Mode>Grayscale and missed out the Hue/Saturation step.

As a teacher, I have always to ensure that each step works and that means checking each step before moving on. I also introduce software to other teachers and have give them step-by-step instructions. There is nothing more annoying when it breaks down at the first step.

Robert Dalzell

Oops, seems like we didn't make a good impression with you, Robert. In answer to your first question, the Pencil tool does indeed exist in Photoshop 7. It can be found by clicking on the Brush tool icon in the toolbar and a little fly-out menu will appear. This is where the Pencil tool lives. As for the Duotone tutorial, we have to hold our hands up about that. We run CS2 in the office, and it was only recently that we managed to track down a copy of Photoshop 7.0. Apologies for the confusion, but we promise that our tutorials will now be tested in version 7.0 and we'll highlight any features that are missing and give alternatives for that version.

A lot of tools are hidden in the toolbar, but if you get lost refer to the manual that came with your software

Reference section

I've just purchased the first issue of *Photoshop Creative* and my initial assessment of your magazine is that it is fabulous. I am really looking forward to seeing future issues. I would, however, like to make a suggestion, which would greatly improve your offering in my eyes. For me anyway, magazines are increasingly replacing books as reference material. Unfortunately though, as my collection of magazines increases I am finding it more and more difficult to find the material that I need. I may remember an article I have seen in the past that I want to review again but have no means of finding it without trudging through pages and pages of magazines. I, and I'm sure others, would greatly appreciate an annual index that catalogues at least the major articles for a much quicker reference. If not an annual index a search tool within your website would suffice. It is entirely likely that I will want to hang onto my collection of *Photoshop Creative* for several years to come and I hope you can make it easier for me to use your magazine long after my initial read.

Christina Lauder

Thanks for your suggestion Christina. It's actually something we've been thinking about too! At the moment we're not sure whether it will be something that appears annually in

As your collection of Photoshop Creative stacks up, we'll make sure we supply an index of past content so you can easily find articles

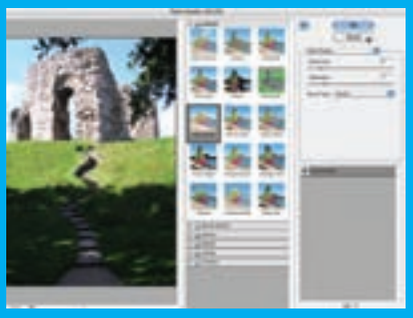
Readers' tip

Easy revert

I'm a big fan of using the Filter Gallery in Photoshop and any time I take a photo, I'll try out one of the filters to see how it looks. I'm not very artistic – I would love to be able to draw and paint – but I find the Artistic filters are enough for me right now. Maybe your digital painting pages will help me improve! One thing that annoyed me with the Filter Gallery is that if I made a mistake, I would have to press Cancel and then open the Filter Gallery again. It used to drive me mad – especially since I'm prone to making mistakes! Anyway, someone told me that if you hold down the Option button [for Mac users. PC users need to hold down the Alt key – Ed] the Cancel button turns to Reset. This means that when I make my mistake, I just hold down Option and don't have to close the Filter Gallery.

Trevor Weave

Thanks for the tip Trevor that's one we use a lot. We love time-saving tips, so keep them coming!



Don't cancel, you can reset and save yourself some time and hassle

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Talk to us!

Send us your thoughts on anything Photoshop to PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk with the subject header 'Letters'. Alternatively, post your missives to Letters, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH2 6EQ, UK

the magazine, or whether we should include something on the website. What would people find more helpful?

Colour concerns

Just popped into WHSmith and saw *Photoshop Creative*. I've been waiting for a Photoshop-only mag so well done.

Just a quick idea for a subject area to cover – colour management. I'm so disappointed with the quality of prints. You spend hours getting the screen image just right only to get a dismal print either from the inkjet or from an online processing lab.

I've invested in an electronic monitor calibration tool but I think the whole issue of setting workspaces, printer profiles (including those you can download from online labs line Peak Processing) would be well worth covering in the mag. After all

*Electronic calibration units like the Spyder (**www.colourconfidence.co.uk**) can help your colour management*

if you don't get the colour management issues right everything else is a bit pointless. I like the Scott Kelby approach in his *The Photoshop CS2 book for Digital Photographers*. He doesn't muck around with loads of theory, he just tells you how to do it. 'Removing Love Handles', 'Lessening Acne', 'Whitening Teeth' – it's all in the book. Okay perhaps not the most creative of subjects but it's what real people want in the real world. Following that approach and you're onto a winner – trust me – I'm a marketeer.

Anyway enough of my ranting - good luck with the mag I hope it does well. Now where's the phone number for the subs?

Mike Silve

Colour management is high on our forward feature list, Mike, so you can be sure we will cover the essentials somewhere along the line. Scott Kelby is a genus when it comes to getting to the heart of Photoshop, and each issue we will mix the more creative tutorials with the kind of 'real world' techniques you mention.

SUBSCRIPTION: WORLD DOMINATION

Getting *Photoshop Creative* in other countries

Hello, I'm Alex, I'm not a sophisticated 24-34 year-old reader (as you present Imagine's magazine readers on your website…) but a 43-year-old motivated and curious professional photographer starting to learn about Photoshop (I have CS right now).

I was visiting your beautiful city recently for the Frida Kahlo's exhibition at the Tate Modern, and by chance saw your magazine at the Borders shop on Charings Cross. I immediately bought a copy as I've been looking for an exclusively Adobe Photoshop magazine for quite a while now, so I was really happy when I fell on your premier issue. Great value and a big aide as I sometimes struggle with some Photoshop items.

Can you tell me if I can find your magazine in Brussels? If not I would very much like to subscribe to *Photoshop Creative*.

I'd like to wish you good luck with your (our?) new magazine.

Dreesen Alexandre

Ahh, thanks for getting in touch with us, Dreesen. We're delighted that you like the magazine and really hope we can help you sort out your Photoshop struggles, plus give you a bit of creative inspiration to boot! We've had quite a few queries like yours regarding availability overseas. We're currently in the process of expanding our international sales, but haven't made it to Brussels yet. However, our subscription service can be used whatever country you're in, so turn to page 96 and fill out the form!

Shorts

CD idea

My congratulations to you for the wonderful layout and content of your new *Photoshop Creative* magazine. As a dedicated Photoshop user I love the variation in projects featured, and the way it sparks the creativity. I would prefer the CD to contain actual tutorials, with a digital artist showing and explaining step by step the procedures for the projects.

Teresa

We'd love to include video tutorials on the magazine – it's just finding someone who can do them! We actually testing a couple of other ideas along the line of video tutorials, so watch this space!

We pack in as much as we can on the disc, but let us know if we're missing something

Which version?

Hello, I really like your magazine but would find it helpful to know which version of Photoshop you use for the tutorials. I don't want to miss out!

Dennis Tomon

We've been asked this by a couple of other readers, so have flagged up which version the tutorial works with in the bottom panel at the start of each tutorial.

Creative hub

The latest news stories for the Photoshop community

updates

Genuine Fractals updated

If you've ever suffered from tiny images, the Genuine Fractals plug-in is for you. It's just had an update and gives you the ability to increase the size and resolution of images without loss of quality. Genuine Fractals 4.1 is on sale now from **www.onOnesoftware.com** with prices starting at $159.

iStock passes half-million mark

There were celebrations in the iStock offices as it exceeded the 500,000 member mark. It seems people can't get enough of the service, and who can blame them. With more than 450,000 images (which grows by about 11,000 images a week) it's the perfect choice for designers. If you're still to join the iStock revolution, visit **www.istockphoto.com**.

See the perfect rainbow

Colour Confidence specialises in colour management solutions and has upgraded its ColorVision ColorPlus product as well as making it available to Mac users for the first time. For around the £70 mark, you can get monitor calibration software and colour hardware sensor to make sure you see wider range of colours and improved flesh tones. Visit **www.colourconfidence.com** for more information.

TOP STORY

Wacom's wide load

London's Mac Expo show debuts Wacom's first wide format graphics tablet tailored to a 16:10 aspect ratio

Visitors to October's Mac Expo held at London's National Hall, Olympia got to take a first look at Wacom's new Intuos3 A5 Wide.

This is the company's first foray into the wide format market and has come as a response to demand from users and the huge growth of widescreen LCD monitors and notebooks. The A5 Wide has an active area of 6 x 11 inches and boasts a 16:10 aspect ratio. This means that the tablet is more intuitive to use because the whole area of the tablet matches perfectly to a widescreen monitor.

Users of Wacom's tablets have always been able to 'map' the tablet to the monitor, so the tablet area correlates to the monitor area. This means that if you position your tablet pen in the lower-left corner, the cursor on screen should also be positioned in the lower-left corner. Unfortunately trying to map a square tablet area with a rectangular widescreen monitor results in some distortion of objects since the proportion of the tablet doesn't fit with the screen. Wacom's answer was to produce the Intuos3 A5 Wide.

Apart from the obvious increase in length, the A5 Wide has the same features as the other tablets in the Intuos3 range, such as the customisable ExpressKeys for accessing modifier keys straight from the tablet, and the Touch Strips for zooming and scrolling in applications. Users also enjoy 1,024 levels of pressure sensitivity in the pen tip and eraser of the Intuos3 Pen and Airbrush. In addition to these two devices, you can also buy the Art Marker and enjoy the rotation technology that allows you

Top and above: People were crowded round the Wacom stand at Mac Expo to get first play of the A5 Wide

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In the beginning, part 2

Follow the evolution of Photoshop in this regular series

Adobe became involved with Photoshop in Sep 1988, where the company made a deal with the Knoll brothers to buy the license to distribute the software – the buy-out of the program didn't happen for a few years yet. So the Knoll brothers got down to working on a shipping version, with Thomas writing the code and John creating plug-ins. It's reported that some of Adobe's people weren't too happy with the idea of plug-ins, thinking them too gimmicky, so John had to sneak them in. February 1990 saw the release of Photoshop 1.0, but early bugs meant that most people actual ended up using version 1.0.7.

"At present, the widescreen tablet is only available in A5 but if it proves popular, that could all change"

to get the same effects as a traditional marker pen.

At present, the widescreen tablet is only available in A5 size, but if the product proves popular, that could all change. If you can't wait that long, expect to pay around £290 for the tablet. Find out more from **www.wacom.com**.

Another product causing a a stir at the Mac Expo was Apple's new Aperture software. Aimed at professional photographers, it claims to make working with RAW files as easy as possible. In addition to non-destructive image processing, it also provides users with colour managed printing and custom web and book publishing.

Working across two monitors is much easier with the Intuos3 A5 Wide

Aperture automatically groups photos into Stacks based on the time interval between exposures and photographers can browse through projects in a full-screen workspace. The photos can be edited non-destructively, which saves having to create duplicates. Any image edited in Aperture can also be directly exported into Photoshop for further editing.

If you're sold, you can buy Aperture for £349 from the Apple Store (**http://store.apple.com/Apple/WebObjects/ukstore**).

Photoshop on the small screen

Photoshop TV video podcast brings image editing to your iTunes

For a weekly fix of Photoshop fun, check out the new Photoshop TV podcast. Formally Photoshop Radio (see news, issue 1), the free podcast has been updated to take advantage of the new video iPod and users now get to see a half hour show dedicated to their favourite image editor.

Each week Photoshop fans can tune in to Photoshop TV for chat, opinion and tutelage

The show's hosts are Scott Kelby, Dave Cross and Matt Kloskowski, otherwise known as the 'Photoshop Guys', who provide a humorous and lively look at what's new in the world of Photoshop, plus there are interviews promised with the big names of the Photoshop industry. In addition to the chat, there are tutorials, tips and shortcuts for users of the program plus various competitions. If you miss any of the shows, you can look at the archives on the Photoshop TV website, found at **www.photoshopguys.com**.

Upon its launch, the show zoomed up Apple's podcast chart to reach the heady heights of number 2, beating big names such as ESPN. Over its first 72 hours, over 6,200 subscribers made it part of their regular listening.

If you'd like to see it for yourself, you can view it from the Photoshop Guys website or access it through your Podcast link in iTunes. Do a search for Photoshop TV and then hit the Subscribe button.

The 'Photoshop Guys' make Photoshop TV enjoyable to watch, and the tutorials are always handy

What's hot and not this month

RED HOT
Wacom's lovely A5 widescreen tablet. We tried it at Mac Expo and it's fabulous.

WARM
Using Photoshop as a digital painting tool. We will never tire of it!

UNCOOL
Masks have a reputation for being confusing and clunky. They're not, see pg 38.

SUB ZERO
Throwing away old photos – recycle them using our tutorial on page 42.

competition corner

DIGITAL CANVAS AWARDS
www.digitalcanvasawards.com

NAPP has announced the very first Photoshop competition. With 11 categories and a top prize worth $2,500, it's time to flex your creative muscles. Deadline for entries is 31 December 2005. .

D&AD STUDENT AWARDS
www.dandad.org

The prestigious D&AD Student Awards are kicking off again. Each year the organisation brings together the brightest design graduates to fight for one of the hallowed Pencil awards. Entries need to be submitted by 24 March 2006.

ALERT! | DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR READER'S CHALLENGE SEE PAGE 98

Make a date

At a loose end? Here are the must-see events this month

OCT 10–APRIL 10
PHOTOSHOP ESEMINAR
Load up **www.adobe.com/events/main.jsp** and register for a special one-hour eSeminar that unveils the delights of Photoshop and how it can be used for photo and image editing.

NOV 22-23
NIKON SOLUTIONS EXPO
Digital photographers need to make their way to the Olympia Conference Centre for a free two-day conference with equipment and techniques. See **www.solutions-expo.co.uk**.

NOV 30
PHOTOSHOP CS2 DEMONSTRATION
If you find yourself in London on 30 November, pootle over to Apple's Regent Street Store where you can learn the latest cutting-edge techniques to help you save time and work smarter in Photoshop.

Best free stock sites

Free photos for your projects

The Stock.XCHNG is packed with free photos on all manner of subjects, just register to download them. See **www.sxc.hu** for more.

MorgueFile is a huge repository for loads of different photos on loads of different subjects. Get there by visiting **www.morguefile.com**.

For textures, Image*After is hard to beat. There are loads of the buggers, and they're all free! Go to **www.imageafter.com**.

FontShop until you drop

New features makes finding fonts a breeze

It can be difficult trying to find just the right font, but one company has redesigned its site to make things as easy as possible for users.

FontShop (**www.fontshop.com**) has thousands of fonts from over 50 different type foundries, but has recently streamlined its search process to make font finding easier for users. Visitors can now browse the 30,000 fonts on the site by name, category, foundry or designer. Alternatively, users can harness the TypeNavigator to search by sight.

In addition to the browsing facilities, the site also has the FontFeed service. This is a regular update of what's new at FontShop and what's going on in the world of design and typography in general. "Graphic designers can visit the FontFeed several times a week to ogle the web's best in typographic design, pick up tips on working with type, and discover some our favorite underrated fonts," said FontShop's Stephen Coles. "The FontFeed is food for the creative brain."

Prices start from around 21Euros, although there are free fonts to be found as well for you to start amassing into a font library. For the freebies, visit **www.fontshop.com/freefonts**.

Font freaks should pay a visit to FontShop for a decent fix of typography worship

Scoopt

snap...send...sell

Make money from your photos

Become a citizen journalist and earn extra cash for Christmas

Scoopt, the online 'citizen journalism' site, is calling out for members of the public to send in their newsworthy photos to be sold to the press.

The run-up to Christmas becomes editorial 'silly season', meaning that a keen photographer might be able to capture a perfect picture to sell to the press. Maybe it's a freak weather condition, or a celebrity doing their Christmas shopping; whatever the shot, if you think it's good enough, Scoopt can put you in touch with the right people.

Scoopt allows anyone to sell a picture to the media for the same kind of price as a professional photographer. The services is free to join and allows members to make money either by taking and selling their photos, or by referring a friend and earning a 10% commission on their picture sales. The Scoopt sales team take a proactive approach by selling directly to the media and all members retain copyright over the pictures they take.

"Citizen journalism is making its mark on the UK media and the run-up to Christmas is a fantastic time to get involved", says Kyle MacRae, founder of Scoopt. "Every day, in virtually every newspaper and on the television news, amateur material is being published and broadcast… it is increasingly members of the public rather than professionals who find themselves in the right place at the right time to capture an event – and cash in."

Members receive 50% commission on any photo they sell and if you think you'd like to rise to the challenge, visit **www.scoopt.com** for more information.

> "Citizen journalism is making its mark on the UK media and the run-up to Christmas is a fantastic time to get involved."
> Kyle MacRae, Scoopt

Photo credit: Scoopt/Steve Bell

This entry found itself on the pages of the Bristol Evening Post

The team's wish list

Pure material delight…

INTUOS3 A5 WIDE

We're a bit smitten with Wacom graphics tablets and this latest release is lovely.

WE WANT IT BECAUSE…

The normal A5 tablets can go a bit haywire when used with a widescreen monitor, so this little beauty is just the ticket for seamless tablet to cursor action. It costs about £290 and you can get more info from **www.wacom.com**.

A wide range of artists have used the PhotoArtistry site including Jonathan Crown left-hand side) and Lucy Cullingford (right-hand side)

THE STORY BEHIND...

PhotoArtistry.co.uk

Canvas printing isn't as expensive as you might think, especially if you use the PhotoArtistry site. We caught up with Anne Herbert to find out how it all started...

It's intensely satisfying to create something in Photoshop, but it's even more satisfying to print it out to admire at your leisure. For a really special touch, why not get a professional printing service on the case? Work can look stunning if printed to canvas, and one of the best services we've found is PhotoArtistry.co.uk. This UK-based company offers all sorts of options for anyone who has a photo or piece of art they would like to have printed professionally. In addition to art quality photo paper, the company also has an excellent range of more novelty printing options, such as stretched canvas, MDF block mounting and polycotton. In addition to the printed products, the company also offers a scanning service and will even clean up dust and marks before using the file.

If you'd like to know a little bit more about how the site works, we've got a special tutorial on using the service on page 56. PhotoArtistry has also teamed up with us to bring you an exclusive competition where you can get one of your own images printed to a stretched canvas.

In the meantime, though, we spoke with the company's Managing Director, Anne Herbert, to find out a bit more about the service and how it all started.

Tell us a bit about the website and the company in general. When was it set up and why?

The website was first set up in 2000. The initial site was something of a brochure site set up to invite fellow artists who wanted to reproduce their artwork to send them to me for printing. Fortunately it attracted photographers and digital artists and in 2002 we updated it and added an e-commerce back end.

How has the service grown over the years? Has anything changed in particular?

Well, we've pretty much grown in demand to our customer's requirements. Initially we only provided a canvas printing service with prints rolled up into tubes and dispatched through the Royal Mail postal service. Customers began to ask if we would stretch the canvases over wooden stretcher frames and because I had experience of this from my days at art school, I was able to provide this as a service as well. After a couple of years we began to think about extending our portfolio of services and added MDF block mounting to our range of services.

Did you have a typical client in mind? Have you been surprised by who has used your service?

Yes, I bought the printer to print my own artwork and thought I could attract fellow artists but instead got photographers and interior designers. Our client base consists predominantly of photographers who provide value added services to their clients. We are trying to expand into commercial outfits such as offices, hotel and leisure as well as retail outlets.

What's the most popular product?

The canvas print is still the most popular product, though this is followed very closely by the block mounts on MDF. Canvas prints are more popular with the photographers and private individuals. Commercial outfits prefer the block mounts because they are solid and more robust.

What's the most creative thing someone has used your site for?

We recently had a customer wanting to create a wooden 'Rubic' type cube. The block was made up of images rather than colours. It was an interesting challenge and was needed for some children's charity.

This Philip Nash family portrait illustrates the wrapped canvas stretch option, where the print carries on round the side

Are there any future plans for new services, or is it a case of building on what's already offered?

Yes we have managed to create a very successful brand and are showing some leadership in the canvas printing industry. We have been able to successfully provide a very high quality product at an affordable price and the entire buying experience online is fairly straightforward and simple. We are trying now to position ourselves as providers of creative display solutions using innovative techniques and media. We will be launching an acrylic range in the autumn and will be looking at adding more functionality to the images by mounting them on screens and coffee tables, for example.

Turn to page 56 to find out how to use the service and also get further details on entering our competition,

Ideas for printing

What to use the site for...

01 Have your favourite illustration mounted on an MDF block.

02 Create your own fabric by printing images to polycotton.

03 Turn MDF blocks into printed screens.

04 Gather your images together to produce a photo montage.

05 Use printed MDF blocks for cupboard doors.

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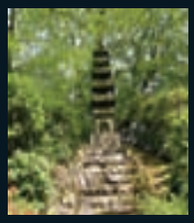
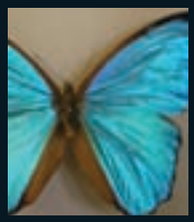
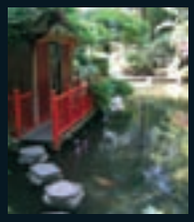
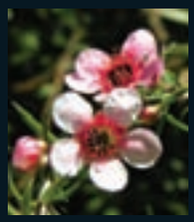
Exhibit

We've been swamped with entries to the first issue's Readers' Challenge – here's a selection of the best but watch out for even more next issue









We'll be honest and say we were a bit unsure as to how our Readers' Challenge was going to work out. After all, just because we like fiddling about with different elements and trying to make new illustrations doesn't mean that everyone else will. But boy, were our worries unfounded. We've had loads of entries covering the whole range of Photoshop styles. From the more illustrative to photo montage, it's been a real joy seeing how some of you have taken our source images and turned them into your own style. Over these four pages you can see a small selection of the entries, which will hopefully inspire you to enter this issue's challenge. As well as exercising your brain cells, you could win a copy of the Fluid Mask plug-in. So what are you waiting for? Download the images from this issue's disc and get creating!

Fiona Watson

We were really impressed with Fiona's two images and loved how she managed to convey two quite different moods using similar elements. Texture plays a big part in both images, which comes from Fiona's own flat! "During renovations I have realised I am living in a texture library of old walls, mess, rubble, etc – every cloud has a silver lining," she says. Fiona has blended these textures with her own photos and the images we supplied to create beautifully soft illustrations that have loads of detail. Well done Fiona; a copy of Fluid Mask is reserved for you.

Urban Angel (above)

"In this image, elements incorporated from your photographs include that flower (as a brush), the pagoda, those birds and the butterfly. My imagery includes Glasgow building sites, graffiti, trees, plants, a friend and a decorative initial from the 17th Century."

WINNER!
Gets a copy of the Fluid Mask plug-in

Rest Your Head

"In this I've used your flower (as layers and as brushes), the Japanesy building, the birds and the butterfly. My ingredients include East Coast sea and plants, a friend, notepaper, Chinese writing, chop marks and more distressed walls from my distressed flat!"

Exhibit

Michael Feather

Sunset

"I got the ideas for the treatment of this illustration from your magazine tutorials and tried to combine them into the design. I call it Sunset."

Paul Burrows

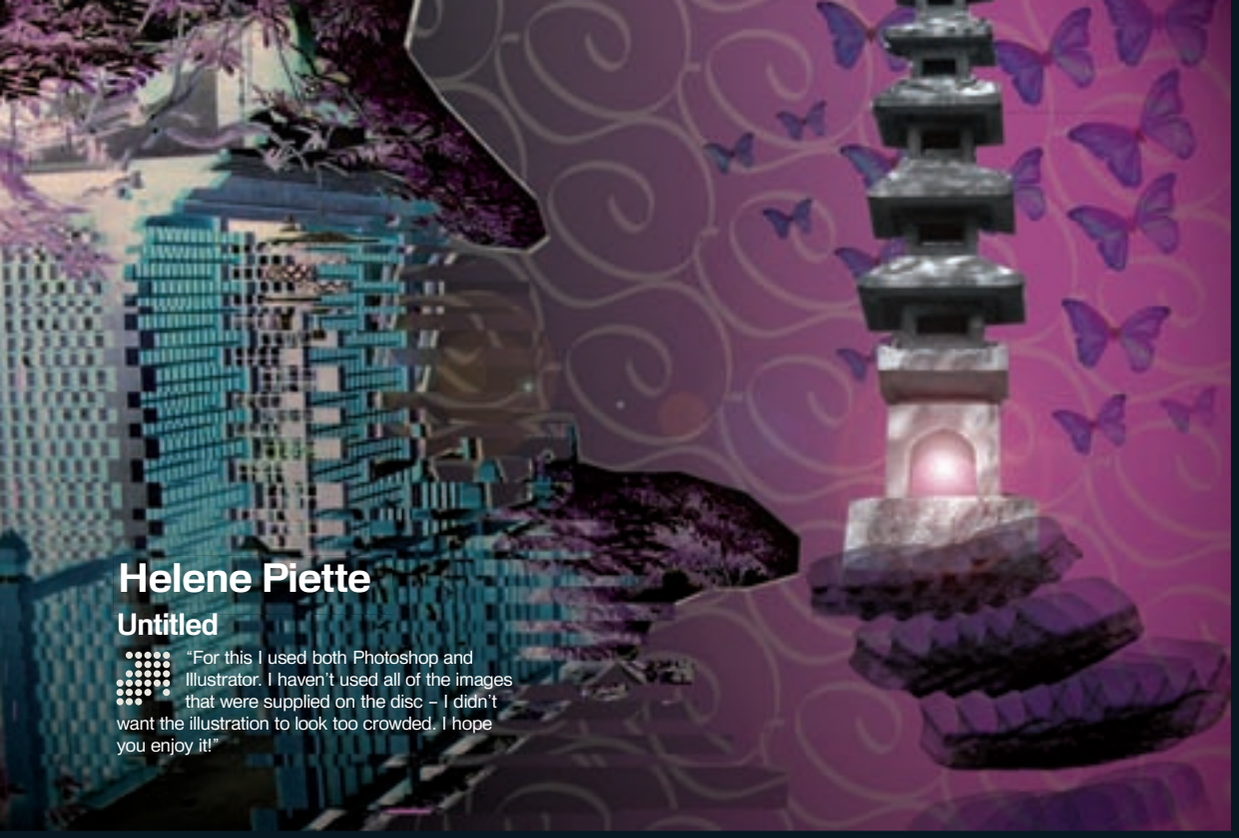
Butterfly

"I mirrored the background, added an orange sky, then blurred and darkened some areas. I mirrored the butterfly, added the face and placed the flower in the centre. I lifted the rest of the crown from the trees. I added the body stone temple and manipulated colours. I added arms behind a wing layer and used curves to lighten. Then I cut out the flowers.

Chris Denmead

The Butterfly Effect

"I was influenced by the image of the 'tower' which reminded me of scenes from *Indiana Jones* films. When I opened the butterfly image I realised it wouldn't be a quick select and paste job. I cloned the wing and created a layer of butterflies. I then changed colours to create a subtle vector look."



Helene Piette

Untitled

"For this I used both Photoshop and Illustrator. I haven't used all of the images that were supplied on the disc – I didn't want the illustration to look too crowded. I hope you enjoy it!"

Turn to page 98 and enter this issue's Readers' Challenge

Get your work featured

If you have some work that you'd like to share with other readers, send it in to us and you could be featured on these pages. Just pop your images onto a CD and send to:

Exhibit, Photoshop Creative, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EQ, UK

Alas, we can't return any CDs

Ashley Brauer

The Butterfly Effect

"My image is called The Butterfly Effect and this is in direct relation to my image, which shows that small things in life matter while the bad things rarely get seen (small things can make the greatest difference). I have created the image to look dreamy as if your eyes caught a rare glimpse of what actually happens."

Adele Gregory

Shrine

"In keeping with the oriental theme of the sample photos I've tried to re-create the look of a screen painting from Southeast Asia. The near bushes and large butterfly were converted with Dry Brush and Rough Pastels. The biggest challenge was achieving the right tone and hue without losing any definition, saturation or lightness."

Illustrate with Photoshop

There's more to Photoshop than removing red-eye and cropping photos. **Alan Campbell** presents three exciting artists who are using the software to make a big splash in the illustration world

Conventional thought would have you believe that image creation is split into two distinct fields: vector and raster graphics. The same conventional thinkers will probably tell you that Adobe's Illustrator software is there purely for vector illustrations and that Photoshop will never offer anything more than raster work, end of story. Because vector has always been thought of as the format of illustrators (another thing to blame conventional thinkers for) Photoshop has by consequence been belittled when it comes to illustration prowess. But conventional thinking has also been responsible for declarations such as the world being flat and countless other urban myths that have all been debunked.

While there's no getting away from the fact that Illustrator will always be a vector package simply because it works in the vector format, the truth is that Photoshop is now as much a part of the digital illustrator's armoury as trendy specs. Gone are the days

Image copyright of iLovedust

Image copyright of Derek Bacon

Image copyright of Blake Loosli

when the only time an illustrator would open Photoshop would be to convert an image or to manipulate a photograph before bringing it back into familiar fold of their beloved vector software.

Through a mixture of users' ingenuity and some significant software updates over the years, Photoshop now contains virtually everything you need to create stunning digital art. Sure, Illustrator is still better for vector art and if you need the scalability it wins hands-down, but don't think for a minute that you can't achieve equally impressive results using Photoshop's built-in Path tools. And if you do find Photoshop inadequate for any particular task, all you have to do is pop back into your other software – but, like increasing numbers of illustrators, you'll find yourself heading right back into Photoshop to continue.

And this is the crux. We could talk endlessly about the many and varied talents of Photoshop, but you've no doubt heard it all before. Instead, this time we've decided to call in the professionals – people whose design opinions matter, because they're setting the agenda for the next generation of digital design.

After much consideration, we've found what we consider to be three of the brightest, biggest and best illustrators around, and have persuaded each of them to divulge their deepest Photoshop secrets. Despite their completely different styles, you'll find that each of them relies on Photoshop to achieve results, even when you might think they've moved far beyond the boundaries of a mere photo-editing package.

TOP LEFT: Derek Bacon's distinctive colours shows there's more to Photoshop than photo editing

TOP: iLovedust's work proves Photoshop deserves a place at the illustration table

BOTTOM: Blake Loosli's painted effects show another side to Photoshop

Blake Loosli

Web site: www.blakeloosli.com
Style: Traditional-style paint

Since graduating from Brigham Young University in Utah, Blake has been rocking the illustration industry with his traditional-style paintings, and his work has been recognised in competitions by *CMYK* magazine and the Society of Illustrators.

Although his work has all the hallmarks of an old-fashioned painting, Blake reliably informs us that "at least 95%" of his image work is done entirely in Photoshop. He used to base his images on pencil drawings, but recently he has even begun using Photoshop to draw his rough sketches. Blake demonstrates Photoshop's multi-faceted talents perfectly – virtually no one would predict that he uses Adobe's killer package to fashion stunning paintings. However, he builds every image from scratch using Photoshop's painting tools, showing that, if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything in Photoshop.

Blake manipulates the Photoshop software to achieve highly-realistic painted effects

Q+A

When did you first use Photoshop? What was your first project?
I started using it in version 5.5. My first illustration projects were coloring in line drawings, more 'cartoony' than my current work. Usually done just for fun, not even as school projects.

How do you start a new image?
With many of my digital paintings I start out the same as any artist – thumbnail sketches and then full drawings on paper. As I have become more and more skilled with the Wacom tablets, I am now able to do the initial drawings completely digitally, bypassing pencil and paper. Once I have the pencil or digital sketch in Photoshop, I then create a separate layer underneath my drawing and fill it with a middle grey. This middle grey allows me to proceed to create a more full toned drawing. This process allows me to save time by not having to create a full tone drawing on paper, but rather taking a more painterly approach of adding lights and darks to a middle tone.

How do you 'paint' your image?
I usually have a pre-determined colour scheme for the image, so I choose a few key colour combinations. The colours for a portrait usually consist of black, white, an average flesh tone, a more reddish flesh tone, a shade of the flesh that will be the shadow, and colours of any clothing or colours from the environment that may introduce reflected light into the subject. These selected colours are then drawn as small spots on the image. They are drawn with the paintbrush tool set to 100% opacity.

With the colours laid out, I then create a new layer to put my coloured strokes on. With the paintbrush set to a higher opacity (70%) I proceed to lay in the general colour planes on top of the middle grey. Once I have the large planes separated (light, mid, shadow) I can then lower the brush opacity to 20% and overlap the areas, sampling the different colours and creating the different edge transitions. With the colours starting to solidify I often zoom out (much like stepping away from a painting) to make sure that the colour relationships are working.

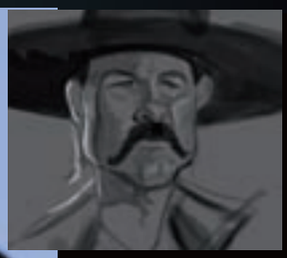
To allow for more flexibility and error-proofing, I keep the separate elements on different layers and often group them together under a 'layer set' for better organization.

Which tools do you use most often in Photoshop? Why do you think this is?
Obviously the Brush tool, for painting. But I really take full advantage of layers and the History palette. With layers and the History palette you are able to add or subtract

BLAKE'S Tip 1

Hardware

I use a PC that I built myself. The main tips I would give about hardware are to have plenty of RAM. I have 2GB currently. At least two hard drives is a must. This is for the Photoshop scratch disk, and for backing up your files. For people wanting to do any drawing or painting you need to have a graphics tablet. I mainly use a Wacom 9x12.



All images on this page copyright of Blake Loosli

Blake's images are built up layer upon layer, giving the rich, textured qualities you see here

BLAKE'S Tip 2

Know your history

The History palette is often overlooked but can be a image making tool, not just a form of backup. Layers are probably the most important aspect of Photoshop, so learn them well… and use them. Make sure you know how to create masks, clipping groups, and layer sets.

things from your work, and then see how your image was affected by switching on or off a layer or going back in the History. This before/after view, for me, makes working digitally much more powerful than traditional media.

How do you achieve realistic hair and brush strokes in Photoshop?

With hair, it's good to set your brush to change thickness depending on the pressure applied. Sometimes I will select brushes that are made up of dots, so that when you make a stroke, it looks like an actual bristle brush. Generally though, I just use the basic brush, work from general to specific and from dark to light, and then go over some parts with the healing brush to remove harsh lines.

How do you combine your workflow in Photoshop with other software?

Often towards the end of a painting I will reach a limit to how well Photoshop can blend the colours and edges. Then I take it into Corel Painter. In Painter I simply blend out a lot of the edges and details for a more uniform look, and to eliminate any areas that look 'splotchy' which can be a result from painting in Photoshop. I also occasionally create vector objects in Illustrator, but usually the Path tool in Photoshop is good enough.

What would you say to people who claim that Photoshop's main use for illustrators is as a touch-up tool?

There are plenty of examples of artwork out there that show Photoshop's incredible diversity. The power of Photoshop is that the tools people think have one purpose can actually be used in different ways. For example people use the Healing Brush to 'touch-up' a photograph, but if you sample a smooth pattern, it can be a great blending tool for painting. Photoshop will only seem limited to someone with limited creativity.

When do know an image is finished?

Working digitally can be a curse in the sense that you can always do more, or you can always try something different. This is why it is important to have a clear idea ahead of time how you want the final image to look.

What advice would you give to someone learning to use Photoshop?

It's good to play around with the program to see what it can do. But at a certain point you have to decide what you want to create and then plan out the steps it will take to reach that point. There are a lot of things in Photoshop that can be used as a crutch; you have to learn to be creative without relying on cheap tricks.

BLAKE'S Tip 3

Learn the quick keys

This saves a ton of time when you are doing basic tasks, but is crucial when you are painting. It is also worthwhile to modify the keys. I use a program called Keymapper to change my keys. Then, inside of Photoshop, I've changed the shortcuts to modify the brush size from the bracket keys to the front slash keys.

Derek Bacon

Web site: www.derekbacon.com
Style: Surreal photomontage

Derek Bacon's images are based on photomontage, and can see him incorporating a range of wildly different photographs into one canvas. It is probably his use of colour above everything else that has seen Derek become a name to watch in the illustration world, however – his subtle tweaking of hues often leads to surreal and otherworldly effects. Combine this with the often everyday subjects he bases his images on, and you have the perfect recipe for success.

Based on the south coast of England, Derek's unique style has seen him create stunning art for *The Times*, *The New York Times* and *The Economist*, not to mention the work he has contributed to countless design magazines and Web sites. Photoshop is his tool of choice, not only for the photo-editing and colouring that he calls upon extensively, but also for the many image elements he creates himself.

Derek is a master of taking ordinary photos and turning them into a colourful alternate reality

Q+A

DEREK'S **Tip 1**

Be subtle

When you are airbrushing, cloning, or erasing, keep the opacity right down (to no more than 30%), and vary your brush sizes. The big trick in Photoshop is to hide all signs of the technique that you've used to achieve the end result. You can't afford to be heavy-handed in Photoshop.

When did you start using Photoshop?
I did an introductory course to Photoshop about six years ago, but didn't start using it daily at work until a year later.

What was the first piece of artwork you created in Photoshop?
The first picture I made was quite similar to the stuff I do now: it was a photomontage of the urban landscape with various people walking past – only back then I knew nothing about how to do this particularly neatly… The spirit was definitley there, I just had no technique.

How do you start working on a project?
Usually I spend time sketching something very rough, just to get my head around the composition, then I go through my photo library to find suitable elements to use. I'll also usually have to make a list of any new things to shoot specifically for that illustration.

How do you build your images?
The way I work is to re-create the sketch in Photoshop, basically sticking little bits of photos together to slowly build up the scene. I don't really worry about the colours or anything at this stage – only when the composition is rock solid will I start colouring it all in.

Which Photoshop tools do you find yourself using most often?
I guess because of all the cutting out I have to do, it would have to be the Pen tool. Probably not far behind that is the Eraser.

How long does it take to create one of your images from start to finish?
I probably take two to three days per picture. Sometimes longer.

On average, how many photos are used in each of your finished images?
It's really hard to say. I've got about 12,000 digital photos, divided into 22 categories, so I might use elements from any of them.

On any image, how much comes from photography, and how much is generated by you?
I would say half and half. Half of my time is spent gluing together bits of photos to build the composition, and the other half is spent 'painting' over the top of them.

Technically, do you always use the same techniques?
I am not especially adventurous with my

DEREK'S Tip 2

Don't be overwhelmed

There is such a lot to this program – you are never going to learn it all. There are also many ways of doing the same thing, and you are always going to get people telling you the best way of doing it. Find a method for you that works, and practice it till it's second nature. It's just a tool for making pictures after all… you need to make it do what you want, rather than it dictating you, or limiting you.

All images on this page copyright of Derek Bacon

techniques, and use the same tools over and over. I always have a particular look and feel in mind that I'm trying to achieve, and I know how to get Photoshop to do this. Largely it involves a lot of cutting out, and re-colouring using Colour Balance, or Hue/Saturation.

How can you tell when one of your images is finished? Do you keep fiddling, or do you have specific aims right from the start?

Deadlines are great for keeping you from fiddling too long. But I know it's finished usually when everything has been overpainted and coloured in. You just sort of know when it's done really... it just looks right.

Which is your favourite image?

One of my favourite images is the one called 'Ing-ger-lund' which was done for a promotional poster for the Illustration agency I'm with. It's based on a famous picture by William Hogarth from the 1700s called 'Gin Lane', which shows an England fallen prey to the evils of gin. I thought it would be a laugh to do a modern version based on the original composition.

DEREK'S Tip 3

What's that noise?

When you are bringing together elements of photos, you can give them a much more homogenous look by adding a little noise (I always use Gaussian and Monochromatic at 2 or 3%). This mimics film grain, and takes away that 'too clean' look that digital art can often have.

What does Photoshop not do that you'd like it to?

I have this fantasy that instead of controlling Photoshop on a computer, it can somehow be done via a large mixing console, sort of like the ones you see in a sound recording studio. The sliding faders could be your layers, and all effects could be added by turning a certain knob or two… I don't know how possible this would be, but it would certainly make the picture-making process more hands-on and active, instead of having to sit at a table moving only your hands for days on end.

Do you think there is anything that Photoshop can't convincingly create or alter?

I think as long as you start with a good quality, high-res image, you can pretty much get away with mimicking anything that real photography can do. However, if you only have poor quality material to begin with, you are going to be more reliant on retouching and overpainting, and so there's the risk it's going to look too worked-on and artificial. But if you move away from the limits of a photographic look and into the world of illustration, then there is no real limit to what you can get from Photoshop. It's really just down to you and your imagination, and this great big digital paintbox…

iLovedust

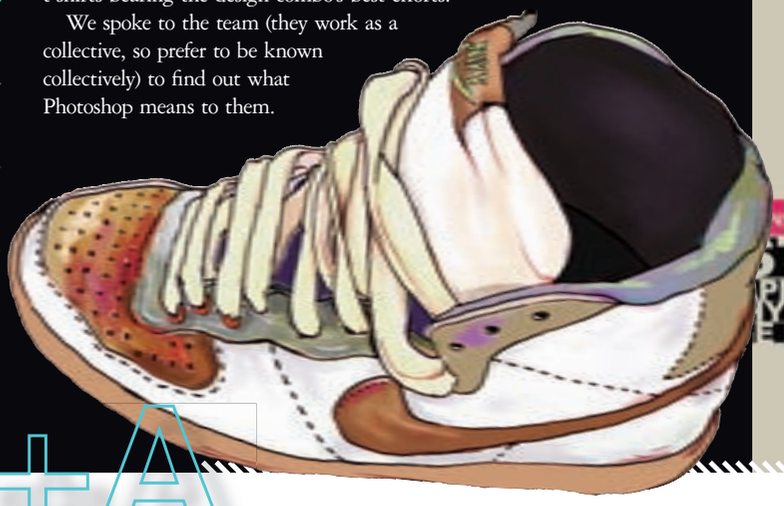
Web site: www.ilovedust.com
Style: Vectors and rasters in perfect harmony

Portsmouth-based design crew iLovedust has quickly gained a reputation as one of the UK's most exciting graphics innovators, despite only being formed in 2003. Since then, the team has fashioned artwork for a host of UK magazines and companies, not to mention being responsible for major Web sites for Oasis and stylish books for Marks and Spencer.

Fusing a mixture of clean vector with photo-collage and downright messy, iLovedust's work is as varied as it is stunning. Working on a 50/50 ratio between Illustrator and Photoshop, the team can boast equal expertise in each program, resulting in their wide range of designs. And as if all of that wasn't enough, iLovedust has just received the official rubber-stamp of success, with the launch of ultra-cool t-shirts bearing the design combo's best efforts.

We spoke to the team (they work as a collective, so prefer to be known collectively) to find out what Photoshop means to them.

iLovedust covers the whole gamut of illustration, from clean drawings to gloriously dirty designs



Q+A

ILOVEDUST'S Tip 1

The power of photos

If you're stuck for inspiration, open up a photo in Photoshop. It's really easy to adjust photos: their contrast, hues; shapes, backgrounds and environments make for very different visual looks that you can tinker with very easily.

How much of your creative work is done in Photoshop?
This is all dependent on client's requirements, but I would say around the 50% mark.

When did you first use Photoshop? Can you describe what the experience was like?
It seems so long ago for all of us that no one can decide what version it was! On average, it seems we started on Photoshop 3. The experience… like going to a sweet shop and not knowing what to try first!

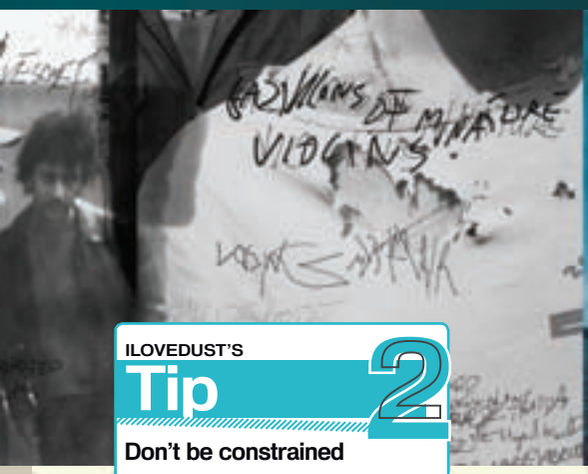
What are the advantages of Photoshop over other packages?
Photoshop lets us manipulate imagery such as photography and scanned textures really quickly and allows us to work with colours and contrasts very easily.

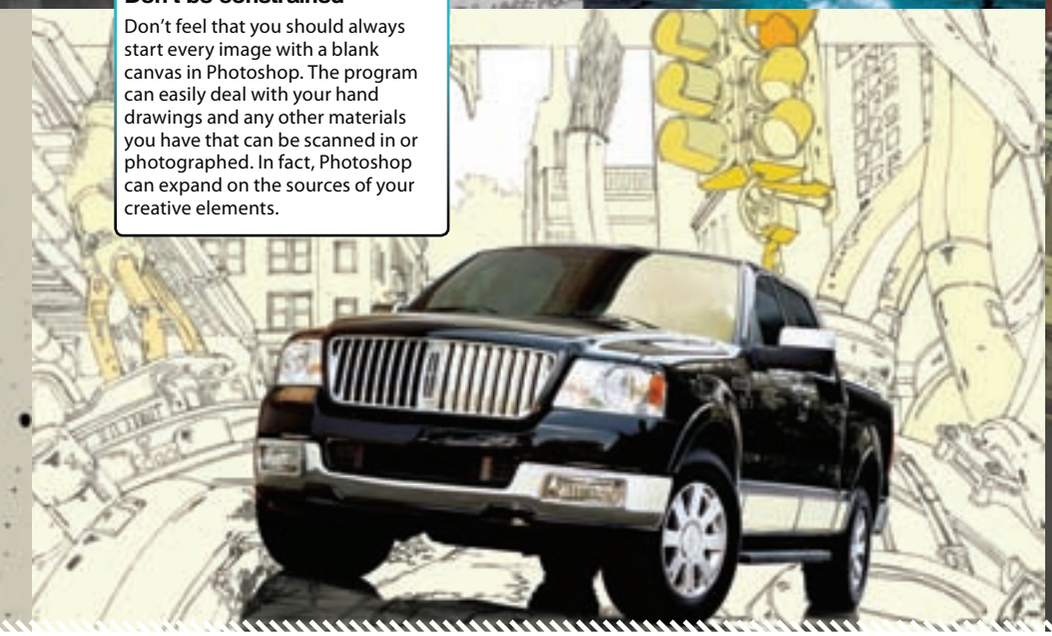
Obviously, vector graphics and raster graphics have their pros and cons. How do you feel about the trade-off and how do you decide which elements of your illustrations should be created in which packages?
We like to use both. Mixing up vectors and raster graphics is a way we can create new ideas and looks for our work. This is also very dependent on who starts the project and/or what feeling we are trying to get across with the image.

How do you go about starting work on a new image? What are your first steps?
We usually have a brainstorm then have a look on Google for a reference point. We then have a cup of coffee and a chat then start working the image up either in Photoshop or on paper so we can get what's in our huge skulls out and into some kind of visual idea.

How long does it take to create an average iLovedust image? How do you know when it is finished?
It would usually take us around a week. We rarely get to do a project straight through from its beginning to its conclusion without client feedback and changes etc. But we usually know when the projects are finished when our eyes start to bleed and our heads spin around!

Which of your images do you feel most proud of?
We love them all and hate them all equally – we have no golden child that we could all ever agree on.





ILOVEDUST'S **Tip 2**

Don't be constrained

Don't feel that you should always start every image with a blank canvas in Photoshop. The program can easily deal with your hand drawings and any other materials you have that can be scanned in or photographed. In fact, Photoshop can expand on the sources of your creative elements.

This image can be bought as a limited edition print and shows yet another side to the Dustie's Photoshop portfolio

All images on this page copyright of iLovedust

As a team, do you find that you have different techniques for doing things in Photoshop?

That's hard to say. We don't really look over each other's shoulders when we work. Everyone in the team has little tips and tricks of their own and I think we all learn from each other on certain things – someone might be far more knowledgeable in colour or masking for example.

What Photoshop feature could you not live without?

Layers!!! Layers make creating really nice effects and compositions incredibly easy. They also let you shift them about to create different looks and feels in a matter of seconds.

What does Photoshop not do that you'd like it to?

Well it would be nice if it could handle vectors better but then the same could be said in reverse for Illustrator and its handling of raster images. Photoshop can now do so many things that I don't think any of us have really taken it as far as it can go yet.

What advice would you give to someone trying to learn Photoshop today?

Mess about and have some fun. You can't really do anything that's going to make Photoshop blow up! Just get some elements together and have a good root around in all the tool palettes and functions. Tutorials in design magazines are also really good ways of getting to grips with certain functions and shortcuts and getting ideas for the kind of look you'd like to aspire to.

ILOVEDUST'S **Tip 3**

Combine and conquer

Photoshop offers loads of functions (filters, channels, adjustments, layer features etc). Every one of these is useful and can achieve an effect, but combining them together will let you create your own effects, generating your own unique style in the process.

iLovedust proves that even simple illustration designs can have lots of impact

eMag™

tutorials

From inspiring creative projects to hands-on tool guides, our tutorials will keep you occupied for hours

Photoshop Creative_Issue 3

Big technique

The mask tools 36

Learn how you can use masks to get perfect control over your layers, selections and image life in general!

Focus on...

We continue to work our way through the in-built tools of the Photoshop software and reveal how they can be used to create better artwork

Watercolour brush 30
Brush Strokes filter 48
Bevel and Emboss 68

Cool plug ins

Fluid Mask 70

Find out how this plug-in promises to make the task of cutting out much easier and quicker than ever before. You can also win a copy by entering our Readers' Challenge.

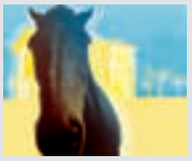
Graphics tablet

Learn how to set up your tablet to work with Photoshop

Tutorial starts on page 58

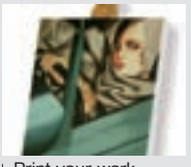
30 Create the cover

36 Get rid of colour casts



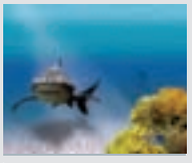
42 Revamp your photos

50 Digital painting: Art Deco



56 Print your work to canvas

62 Fix noise in your images



64 Create water

72 Design a cd inlay

CHECK IT OUT! | ALL TUTORIAL RESOURCE FILES CAN BE FOUND ON THE CD ON THE INSIDE BACK COVER

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 2 hours

YOUR EXPERT
Hannah Gal

ON THE CD
Source photo

Create a watercolour in Photoshop

Take a dive into the world of digital watercolour painting and see how we transformed a photo into this issue's cover

There are many techniques to watercolour art achieving very different results, from contemporary illustration to pastoral, faded atmospheric landscapes.

Artists such as Paul Cezanne, Albrecht Dürer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Paul Klee, Van Gogh and John Constable are all testament to the fact that the medium is full of immense possibilities and nuances, paints, papers and application methods.

But many find painting in watercolour surprisingly difficult. It might look simpler than other painting methods, but is in fact relatively complex, requiring skill and colour know-how. Often, what might appear to be effortless strokes is in fact thought-out and carefully planned.

Turning a photograph into a watercolour painting is not a straightforward process. It's true that Photoshop's Watercolour filter will give you a watercoloured image, but it tends to excessively darken the area.

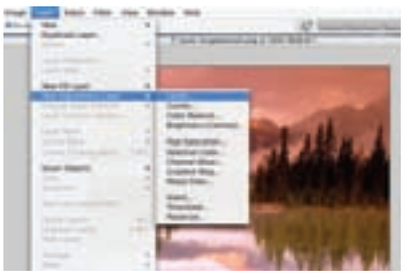
To give your photograph the look of a well-crafted painting, you need to treat different parts of it in different manners. This landscape photograph contains elements like plants, rocks, water, reflections and a stormy sky; each calling for different brushes and application method.

We will look at several real life techniques, from Constable-like wild strokes for the sky, to blended colours. We will work with the Wet Media Brushes, exploring the realistic-looking Rough Dry brush and Drippy, as well and Scatter and Watercolour – all intended to simulate real life processes.

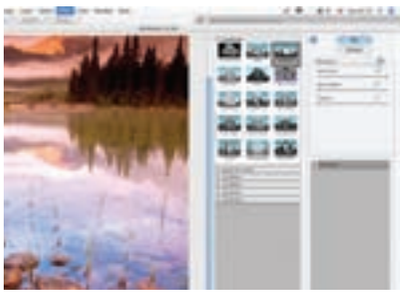
We will use Photoshop filters and Lighting Effects to apply texture, as well as Adjustment Layers and Quick Masks. By the time we're through, you'll have the knowledge to take your favourite landscape shots and turn them into fabulous watercolours.

GET THE PHOTO READY FOR PAINTING

Before you start painting, you need to prep



01 **See to the Levels** Copy the source image from the CD to your desktop. Open in Photoshop and go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Enter 20 for the midtones. That will lighten the image and compensate for filter application, which tends to over darken. With adjustment layers, any alterations you make are temporary and can be edited or removed at any time.



02 **Dry mouth** Duplicate the Background layer and call the new layer 'Drawing'. Select the background layer, go to Filter>Artistic>Dry Brush and set Brush Size to 10, Brush Detail to 0 and Texture to 1. This will apply a painterly effect to the image. Setting low levels of Texture and Brush Detail prevents the effect from being too overbearing.

03 **Soft touch** Go to Filter>Blur>Smart Blur and apply the effect to the layer. This will soften the edges and give a softer, more watercoloured feel. Make sure Quality is set to High, and Mode to Normal. You can also use Gaussian Blur or any other blurring method to achieve a softer look.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3.0 AND ABOVE (APART FROM THE QUICK MASK STEPS)

Tool School

Commitment free

Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer, where you will find most of the image manipulation tools, such as Levels, Curves, Colour Balance, Brightness/Contrast, Hue/Saturation, Invert, Posterise and many others. These are usually applied directly to the image, so the only way to cancel them is via the History Brush. You might like to consider using adjustment layers instead. These will dramatically improve the way you work and give you great freedom to experiment. The changes you make are applied to the image temporarily – they are conveniently stored within the layer and can be accessed at any time, for further alteration.

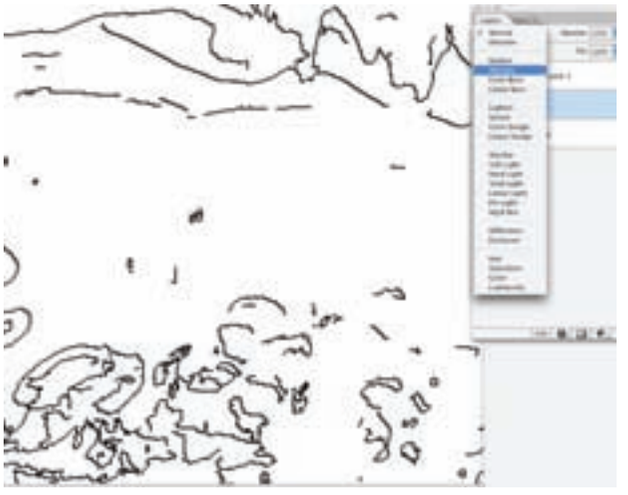
TRADITIONAL TOUCHES

Add in some sketch effects

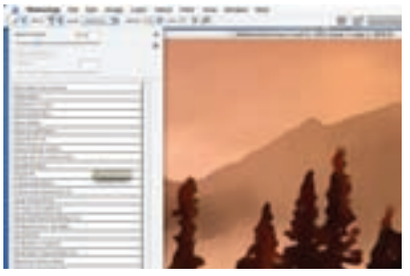
04 Making a sketch A watercolour artwork usually starts with a pencil sketch. We need to create one for this landscape. Click on the Drawing layer to activate it. Go to Image>Adjustment>Desaturate to lose colour detail in the image. This might seem like an odd step but it is merely a preparation for the next.

05 Edges only Go to Filter>Blur>Smart Blur. In the dialog box set Quality to High and Mode to Edge Only. The idea here is to find just the right balance of detail. Let the preview window guide you as you adjust settings. You want the main objects to be drawn, but too much detail can distract from the watery effect.

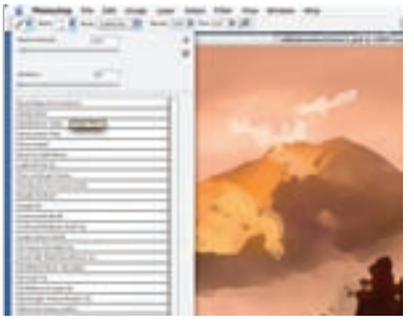
06 Swap it all around The drawing is taking shape. Go to Image>Adjustments>Invert. The drawn lines are now in black and the background is pure white. You now have one layer that is a colourful watercolour painting, and one layer that is a sketch of it.



07 Come together You need to put the two layers together to give the impression that the colour was applied over a sketch. This is achieved by blending. In the Layers palette select the Drawing layer and change blending mode to Multiply. How prominent you would like the drawing to be is a matter of personal choice. You can reduce layer opacity as we have done here or leave it at 100%.



08 Dry old bird Go to Brushes and select the Rough Dry Brush. With this tool we simulate the real life dry brush technique where you hold the brush at a strong angle, and apply paint to paper. Select a light brown tone and apply strokes to the tops and sides of trees, enhancing the shades that are already there. With a darker shade, apply to darker areas of the trees as well as other areas of the image.



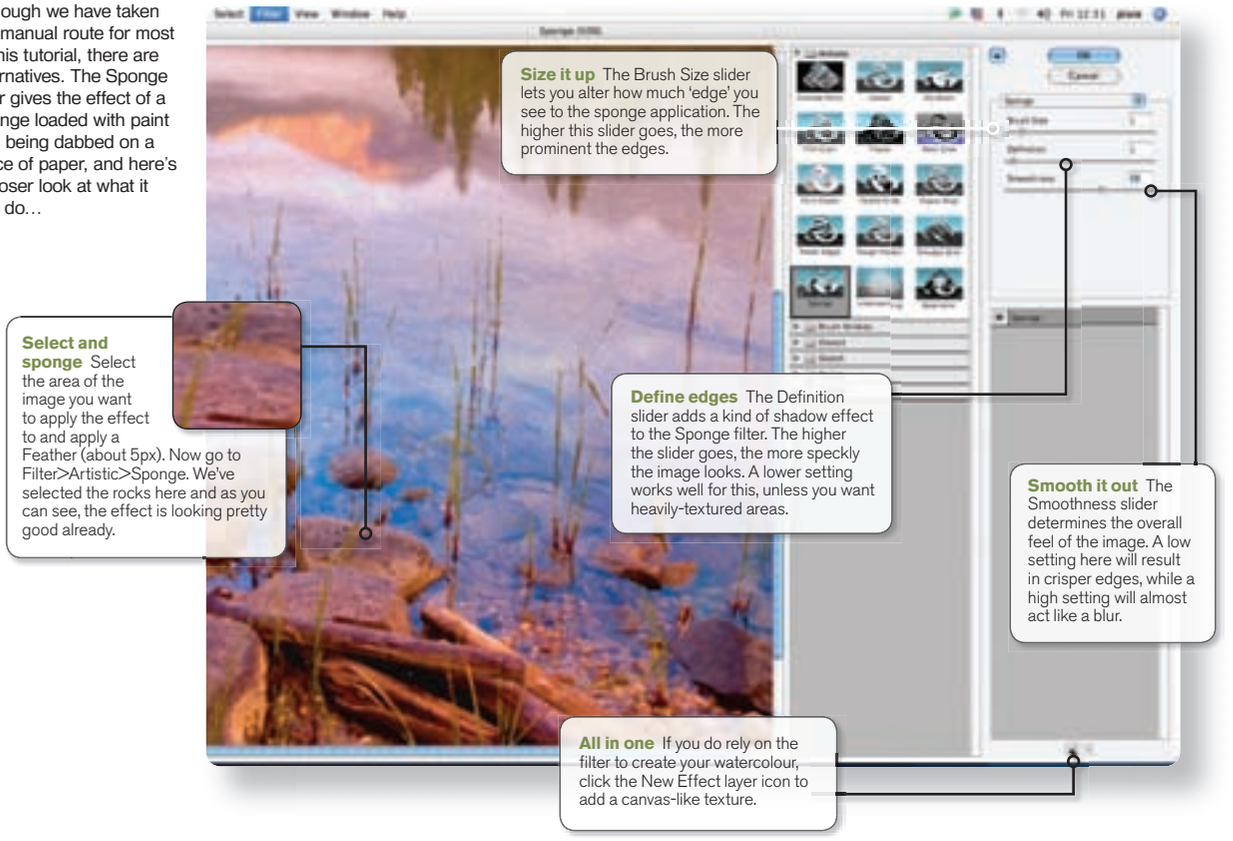
09 That drippy look Go to Brushes and select Drippy Water. Set Hardness to 0 and Master Diameter to 9. Sample white colour and touch lightly just above the mountain top. These are drops falling onto the paper so just a single, fast application at a time suffices. Experiment with this brush to get the drip effect just right.

10 Apply the first wash Go to Brushes and select Watercolour Fat Tip. With Master Diameter set to 65px and Hardness to 4%, start applying to wider, undetailed areas of the image such as the sky, trees reflection and mountains. Work with 100% opacity and adjust brush size according to need.

Filter options

It doesn't all have to be done manually…

Although we have taken the manual route for most of this tutorial, there are alternatives. The Sponge filter gives the effect of a sponge loaded with paint and being dabbed on a piece of paper, and here's a closer look at what it can do…



Size it up The Brush Size slider lets you alter how much 'edge' you see to the sponge application. The higher this slider goes, the more prominent the edges.

Select and sponge Select the area of the image you want to apply the effect to and apply a Feather (about 5px). Now go to Filter>Artistic>Sponge. We've selected the rocks here and as you can see, the effect is looking pretty good already.

Define edges The Definition slider adds a kind of shadow effect to the Sponge filter. The higher the slider goes, the more speckly the image looks. A lower setting works well for this, unless you want heavily-textured areas.

Smooth it out The Smoothness slider determines the overall feel of the image. A low setting here will result in crisper edges, while a high setting will almost act like a blur.

All in one If you do rely on the filter to create your watercolour, click the New Effect layer icon to add a canvas-like texture.

Tool School

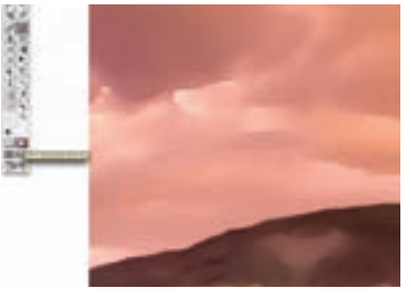
Get the texture

There are many watercolour papers with varying degrees of depth. You can apply anything from a smooth texture to a very rough canvas paper. To retain full control and the freedom to revert, apply your texture on a separate layer. Use blending modes to incorporate texture into the image. Create a new layer and go to Edit>Fill>Pattern. Go to Custom Pattern to access different finishes from Heavy Weave, to Washed Water Colour paper.

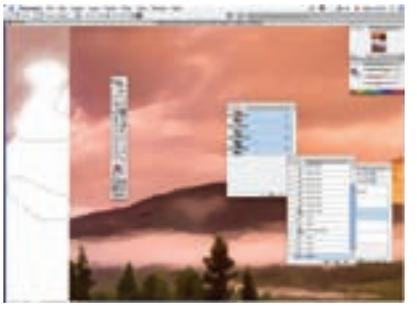
MANY TOOLS MAKE LIGHT WORK

Go crazy with your materials

11 Scatter the paint Real life watercolour uses many type of tools to apply texture. From salt grains and sponge dabbing, to scraping with a credit card or knife. Others use tracing paper and cling film for a variety of textured effects. Under Brush, go to Heavy Scatter Flow and set Size to 24px. Apply to trees to add a touch of depth and the illusion of sponge dabbing.



12 Resist the paint We would like to extend the painting to the left and top. Go to Image>Canvas size and expand the Canvas size by adding 10cm on top and left. Watercolour artists use a Wax Resist method where an oily substance is applied to the paper resisting layers of water-based colour paint which follows. We will use Quick Mask to re-create this effect. Click on the QuickMask Mode to enter it.



13 On cloud nine Use a selection tool to create 'cloud shape' selections on the newly created white area on the left. Set a high Feather level and go to Select>Inverse. Sample a colour of the clouds in the painting, and with a large size watercolour brush, start painting over the area around the selection. Use long, directional strokes to completely cover the area.

Tool School

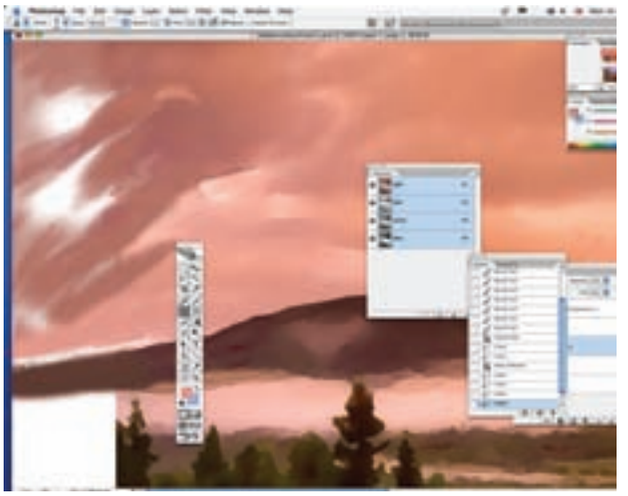
Work with patterns

Photoshop is such a vast program; even long-time users discover new tools. Go to Edit>Fill and select the Pattern option. A long list of Artist Surfaces comes up simulating real life textures. These have a huge potential of enriching an image, specially when they're applied to a separate layer and incorporated into the image using the various Blending Modes.

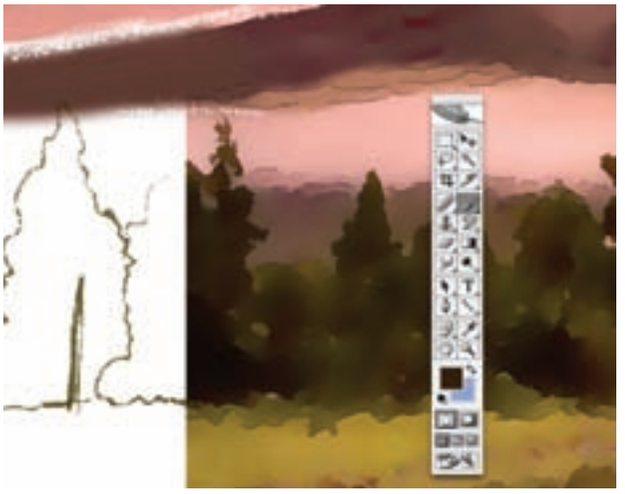
BUILD UP THE EFFECT

Finish extending the canvas

14 Back to normal Apply several layers of paint until the newly created image extension becomes part of the painting. Click to exit Quick Mask and get back to Normal mode. The image now has the brightest white areas in place, and the tone is set for Constable-like dramatic skies.



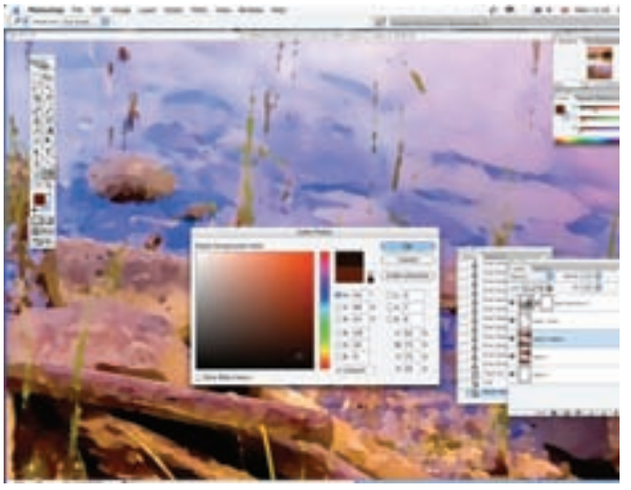
15 Rough it up Go to Wet Media Brushes and choose the Rough Dry Brush. Sample the white centre of the clouds. With a 50% Opacity brush, apply long strokes to add drama to the sky. Move to other areas of the image and apply the same strokes to add depth and texture. This simulates the use of a real life dry brush that's loaded with undiluted paint.



16 Can't see the wood… Staying with the Wet Media Brushes, select Rough Ink and set Size to 16. Loosely copy the shape of the trees in the image into the extended white area. Sample the green and brown of the existing trees and feel free to add a few detailed strokes on your way.

17 More scattering Go to Brushes and select Heavy Scatter from the Wet Media Brushes. Set brush size to 60 and Opacity to 100%. Sample the green of the trees and start filling in the drawn trees. Cover the white area entirely and change brush size to 25. Apply lightly over the first green layer. Continue to apply until the new trees become part of the pre extended image.

18 Rock concert Using any watercolour brush, copy the outline shape of any the rocks onto the new white area. Sample a light shade of brown and apply the same shading as the existing rocks onto the newly drawn rocks. Sample a darker shade and create more shapes. Use a black pen or pencil tool to draw a few sketchy lines.



19 Wet 'n' wild Choose any watercolour brush and apply a light blue shade sampled from existing water. Cover the extended white area. Now select a darker shade, and following the patterns and shapes in the water, apply over the previous blue layer. Move to a darker shade and copy until the illusion of water is fully created.

Tool School

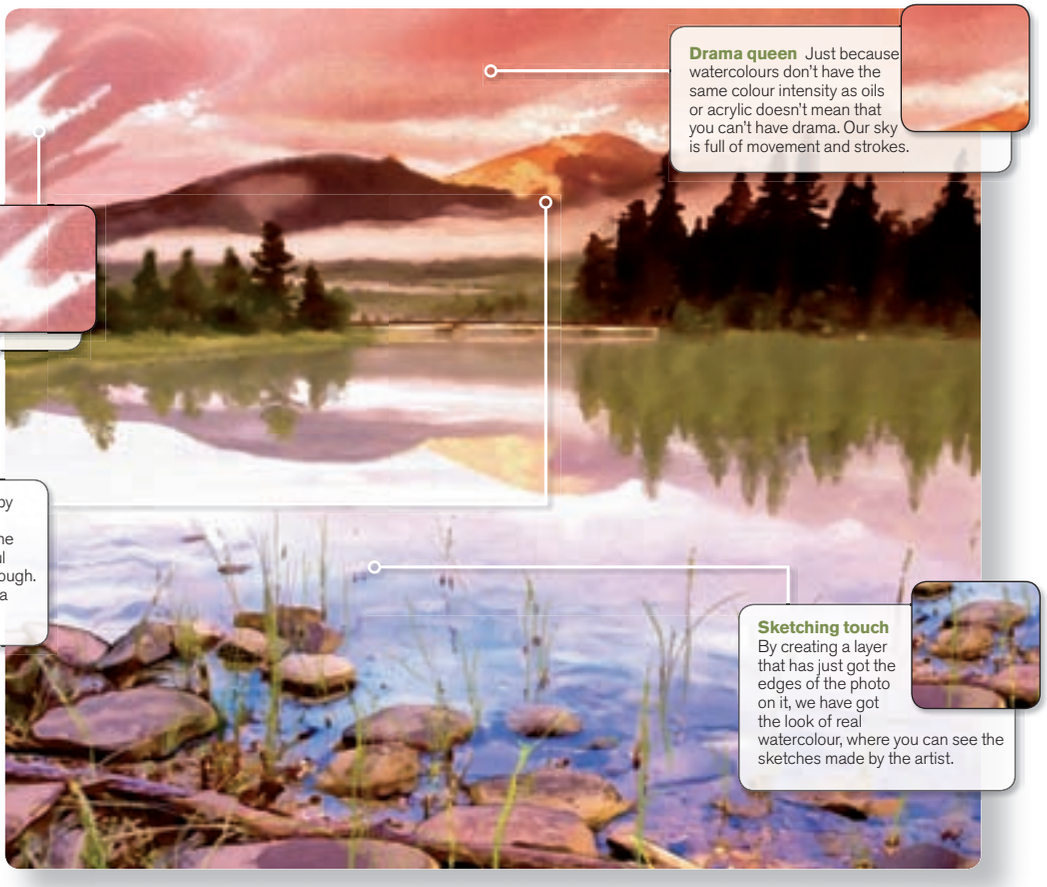
Wet Edges

The watercolour look is created by colour flowing to the edges. This results in the edges being darker than the centre. The flowing paint would normally reach the lines of the sketch on which the painting is based. The easiest way to achieve this look digitally is by going to Filter>Stylise>Find Edges. The filter removes most of the colours and replaces them with contour lines turning a photograph into a coloured pencil drawing. Find Edges offers no control over any aspect but you can go to Edit>Fade to lessen its intensity.

Building up a watercolour

The best way to paint

By using different types of brushes and other Photoshop tools, we've managed to get the same kind of texture that you would get if painting with real watercolours. Here's our tool combination…



Drama queen Just because watercolours don't have the same colour intensity as oils or acrylic doesn't mean that you can't have drama. Our sky is full of movement and strokes.

Mask effects Using a Quick Mask allows us to get the same effect as if traditional masking fluid was used.

Wet drip The Drippy Water brush was used on the top of the mountain. Be careful how you use this, though. It can flood your area with colour.

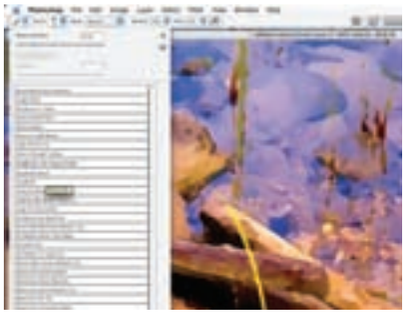
Sketching touch By creating a layer that has just got the edges of the photo on it, we have got the look of real watercolour, where you can see the sketches made by the artist.

Picture credit

The photographer who took the source photo of this tutorial is a man called Dan Bannister. You can find his photos on iStockphoto, or pay a visit to **www.onewordphotography.com**. The photo we used here is called Pyramid Reflection 6 and we think it's rather beautiful.

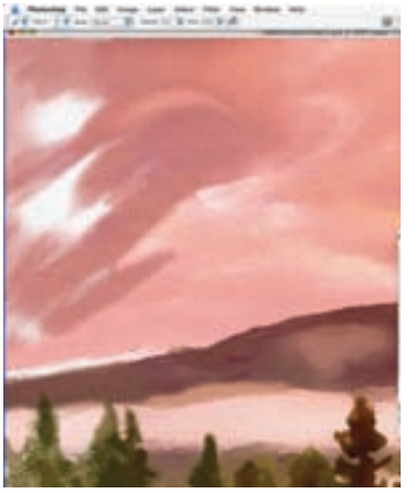
PLANTS AND WATER

Finish things off



20 The foliage Select the Rough Ink brush and set Size to 40. Sample a green shade from the green plants and apply. Use long, curved strokes following the shape of existing plants. Enhance existing plants and create completely new ones. Vary the shade by sampling different parts of green plants, or use the Color Palette.

21 More water treatment Use a watercolour brush to enhance the water effect and add drama to the image. Use a white brush at full opacity to apply strokes to the lightest parts of the image. You are making the already white areas even lighter, making them more prominent. With a small blue brush create wavy lines over the water.



22 The texture Go to Filter>Texture>Texturiser to create the impression of watercolour paper. Set Scaling to 188 and Relief to 7. Use the Preview window to view the effect at 100%. Experiment with Scaling and Relief levels, especially if you have plans to print your creation. You're all done!

Remove colour casts

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Half an hour

YOUR EXPERT
Katty Houtmeyers

ON THE CD
Before file

Don't let annoying colour casts blight what is an otherwise excellent image. Foil their evil plans by bringing the Levels palette into play

One advantage of living in a world where the light is always sunny and bright is that colour casts would be practically non-existent. But an album full of photos taken in the sun would make for a very boring photo collection indeed, so there's something to be said for risking an odd colour cast here and there.

Colour casts occur when one of the RGB colours is stronger than the others and usually happens when photos are taken under artificial light. With fluorescent lights this is often green and with tungsten lighting it will be yellow. If the flash is involved, you're looking at a blue cast. However, as this example shows, you can also suffer from colour casts even if the photo is taken outside. Natural daylight is far from consistent and changes depending on location and time of day. For example, photos taken early in the morning will appear more 'bluish' than those taken at midday. As the day ends, colour will become redder and warmer. But in addition to the natural light, you have to think about location. Photos taken under a canopy of trees, for example, can suffer from a green colour cast.

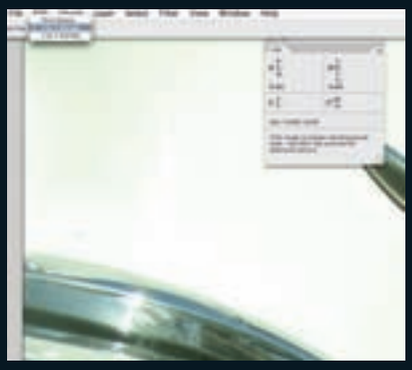
Photoshop provides the perfect tools for removing these colour casts and bringing back your neutral, natural colours. We're going to use the Levels palette here to restore this photo to its rightful glory, by neutralising and defining the black, white and middle grey points. Use this tutorial on colour faded or old pictures; you'll be amazed what it can do.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3.0, 4.0, PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

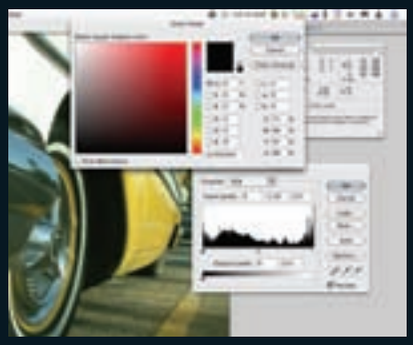
COLOUR CAST BEGONE

Get your gleaming whites back

01 **First things first** Copy the 'before.tif' file from the CD onto your desktop. Open it up Photoshop and take a good look where the problem areas are situated. The most obvious problem is the white in the car that has a yellow, greenish cast. Duplicate the layer by going to Layer>Duplicate Layer. Name the first layer Original and call the duplicate Retouch.

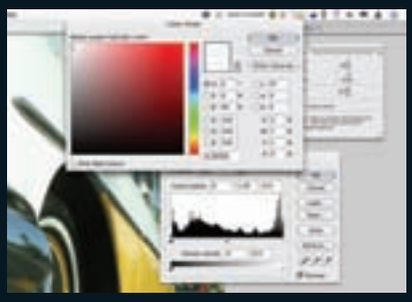


02 **Prepare the workspace** Pick the Eyedropper tool and set the Sample size to 3 x 3 Average. Bring up the Info palette and go to View>Fit On Screen. Now we're ready for optimising the image.

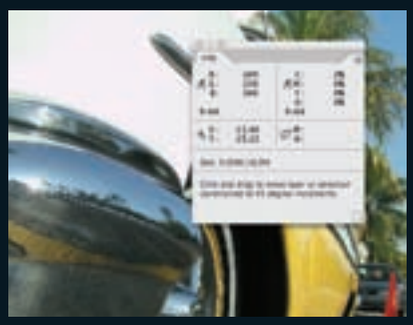


03 **Levels** In the Image>Adjustment menu, bring up the Levels palette. In this dialog box, beneath the Auto button are three eyedropper tools; these are used to set the black, grey and white points of the image. Double-click on the Eyedropper at the left to set the black point.

04 **Setting the back point** After clicking on the left Eyedropper tool, the colour picker box will appear. Click in what seems the darkest, most black part of the image and look at the RGB Values. Here we have: R: 4, G: 9 and B: 2. Set all the values to '4' and click OK to conform. Click with the Eyedropper once more in the darkest area.



05 **Set the white point** We will do exact the same thing for the white neutral point. Double-click on the right Eyedropper tool to bring up the colour picker. Set the eyedropper on a white part that has colour cast. Set all of the RGB values to 246. Click OK and click with the white loaded Eyedropper inside the image. You'll notice that the cast disappears.



06 **More white** The white in an image is one of the most important values; we don't want to make it too white. The minimal white shouldn't be less than 5% colour and the black shouldn't be more than 95%. Check with the Eyedropper tool and see what values crop up in the Info palette.

07 **Hue/ Saturation** Go to the Select menu and choose Color Range. Select the white of the car with the Eyedropper and set the Fuzziness to 95. Bring up the Hue/Saturation box and set the Saturation to -14 and decrease the Lightness to -3. This will remove the last bit of colour cast from your image.

08 **Sharpen** Click out of the selection from the Color Range and examine your image. An Unsharp Mask on top of this would be useful. Go to the Filter menu and choose Unsharp Mask in the Sharpen menu. Set the Amount to 50 and click OK.

Expert Tip

Another way to remove colour casts is by using the Match Color palette. This can be found in the Image>Adjustments menu. Here you can select the Neutralize checkbox to give standard values to your RGB values. Also take a look inside Photoshop's Help Centre to find more tips for working with colour casts, white balance and overall colour adjustments. You can find it by going to Help>Photoshop Help.

THE BIG TECHNIQUE

Whether you realise it or not, even the most basic of Photoshop editing will rely on a mask of some kind, the simplest of which is the humble selection. A mask refers to any technique that allows you to protect certain parts of an image from an action, and this is exactly what a selection does – you only affect the portions of the image inside the selected area. Quick Masks are only slightly more complicated and allow you to modify and edit a selection using painting tools and filters, while alpha channels offer the same editability as well as the ability to save your selection for later.

The more complicated layer, vector and clipping masks work to control visible parts of layers, allowing you to erase areas, or just alter the transparency of elements without having to commit to anything. Herein lies the greatest strength of masks; any changes you make to a layer can be easily changed or quickly reversed at a later date.

The basic principle of most masks (apart from Quick Masks, which use red instead of black) is simple: white is selected (or visible) while black is protected (or invisible). To discover the true wonder of masks, read on and see what they do…

Alpha channels
Channels were the only way to mask areas in early versions of Photoshop. They're still useful for creating and saving selections, and can be used to great creative purposes.
Clipping masks
If you have a layer that you want to use as a shape template for other layers then a clipping mask is in order. These are fantastic for basing a whole set of layer to one single master; in this case the masked face layer which acts as a template for the paint and shadow layers.

Having difficulty working out why (and how) to use masks? Let us explain all…

The mask tools

Working with Quick Masks

Quick, dirty and temporary, but great for selections

Okay, so you can make simple shape-based selections with the Marquee and Lasso tools, a variety of modifier key presses and perhaps a quick blast of the Magic Wand tool. But for an infinitely more natural way of working, make a basic selection and then switch to Quick Mask mode (the button is at the bottom of the tool bar, or just hit the 'Q 'key) and you'll be able to paint your selection using any of the drawing tools. The red areas represent the 'protected areas', otherwise know as everything outside your selection, and you can add or subtract to that area with simple tools such as the paintbrush, or with more complicated and creative methods like blurs and distortion tools. When you're done just convert the Quick Mask back to a selection by hitting Q again. The biggest disadvantage of a Quick Mask is that you'll lose it for good once you deselect the selection, but if you're sure about what you're doing, they are a bonus.

Layer masks

Apply, delete or disable

There's more to layer masks than just creating them. Right-clicking (or Control-clicking on a Mac) will bring up a menu allowing you to disable, delete or apply the layer mask. Disabling the mask is a great way to turn it off temporarily, while applying the layer mask deletes all the masked areas of the layer. You can also use this menu to make the mask interact with active selections.

ALERT | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS USERS ONLY HAVE THE LAYER MASKS TO PLAY WITH

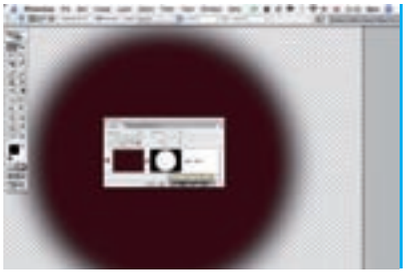
Scary hairy Mary No one likes having to cut out hair, but you can use the mask options to bump up contrast between the object and the background, which makes selection much easier.

Vector masks
While basic painted layer masks win the day for editability, soft edges and speed; vector masks are the only choice for hard-edged, infinitely scalable shape- based masks such as the one used to create these abstract tree shapes.

Types of masks

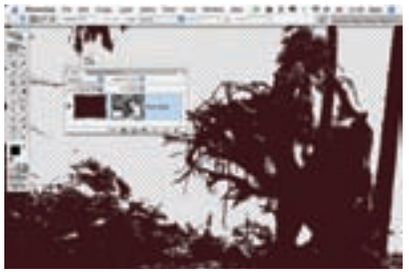
Control your layer contents

If you are using Photoshop, you get a nice amount of choice when it comes to applying different mask options to layers. These mean you can control exactly how a selection is made, whether it's for cutting out or for editing. Masks range in their difficulty, from the very simple notion of Quick Masks through to the more complicated concept of clipping masks. We've presented a summary of the most handy masks below. Unfortunately the choice of masks is severely limited in Elements.



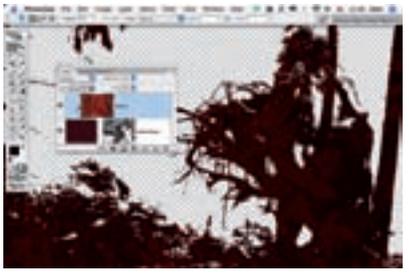
Layer masks

These map what's visible on a layer. Black is masked, white is visible and the shades of grey control the varying transparencies in-between – so 50% black represents an opacity of 50% for the layer's contents.



Vector masks

These work in the same way as layer masks, but the shape is defined by vectors. This makes them perfect for clean and crisp shapes. Shapes can be created by the shape tools or by drawing paths using the Pen tool.



Clipping masks

These are layers stacked upon each other, the mask for which is defined by the layer at the bottom. They are perfect for confining separate, individually editable layers to one masked shape.

Tip

Extra options

Don't expect third party masking plug-ins to be a one-click magic tool; they'll take as much practice to perfect as Photoshop's traditional techniques.

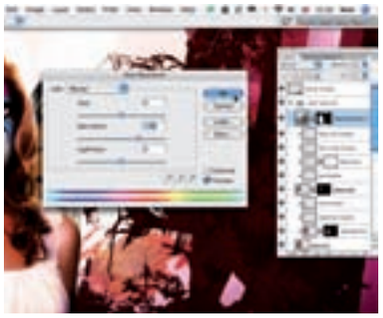
Alpha channels

Cold storage for selections

The colour channels hold the colour information for your image. You can use this palette to store selections. As with all masks, white areas represent those that are selected while black areas depict masked areas. You can even save Quick Masks here by switching to the Channels palette while in the mask and duplicating the Quick Mask channel. Load saved selections by Command-clicking (Mac) or Ctrl-clicking (PC) them. Creating alpha channels by duplicating and editing existing colour channels can be incredibly useful, especially when you need to cut out a curly-haired model from a contrasting background. Duplicate the channel with the most contrast between the hair and background and increase the contrast until the selection is clear. You may still have to do some clean-up work, but it can be a valuable shortcut.

Layer masks and adjustment layers

With a selection made, create a new adjustment layer from the Layer menu. As the relevant adjustment dialog pops up you'll notice an automatic layer mask thumbnail appear next to the adjustment layer in the Layers palette. This confines your adjustments to the area you had selected and can be edited at any time in the same way as any of the other layer masks.



CREATE AN IMAGE USING MASKS

Use all the masking techniques to create unique effects

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

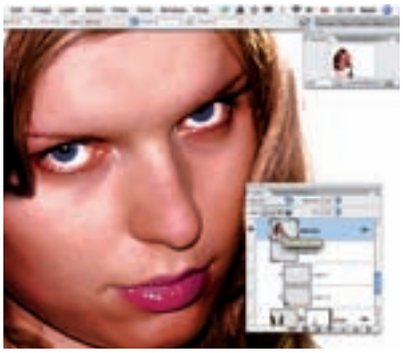
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

One hour

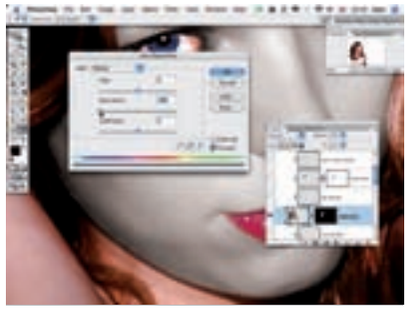
YOUR EXPERT

Ross Andrews



01 The girl We've started with a cutout image of a girl. We're aiming for an over-processed look here so start by colour correcting and over saturating the image a little. We've also retouched the skin and cleaned the eyes up.

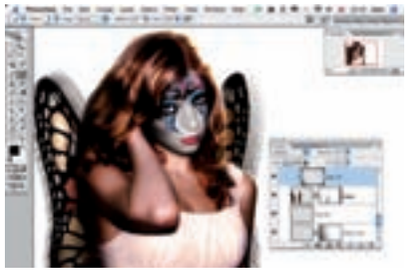
02 Airbrush We duplicated the girl layer and applied the Dust & Scratches filter to smooth the image out. The whole thing should look like a painting. Apply a layer mask by clicking the icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Fill the mask with black to hide the whole layer, and then paint the filtered layer back in using a white brush set to a low opacity. Confine your brushstrokes to the skin areas and take it gently.



03 Mask the mask Duplicate the girl layer again and create another layer mask. Using the Pen tool, draw a path around her face, excluding her eyes and lips. Turn this path to a selection and then select Inverse. Fill this selected part of the layer mask with black. Choose Adjust> Hue/Saturation and desaturate the model's face.

04 Painted masks We've got a painted image of a mask to apply to her face. It has been distorted using the Liquify filter so that it fits the contours of the model's face. The easiest way to confine it to the right shape is to position it directly above the masked face layer created in a step three and then choose Create Clipping Mask from the Layer menu.

05 Shadow puppet To complete the painted mask, we can add some shadows by creating new layers above the masked face layer and clicking the Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask option. This means we can be as free as we want when painting in the shadows, confident that the effect will stay within the masked area.



06 Wings of change The wings were created using the same techniques as the mask; with clipping masks used to constrain the shadows to the wing area. The coloured panels where made partially translucent by selecting a colour channel in the Channels palette, increasing the contrast and then loading that selection into a layer mask.

Sharpen an image using an edge mask

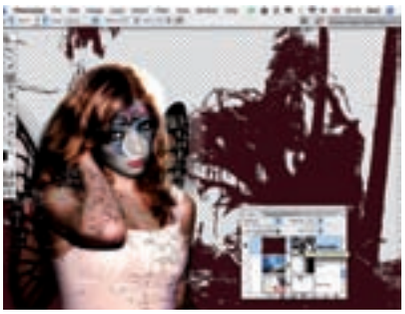
Because sometimes Unsharp Mask just won't cut it

To get crystal-clear images, it's worth trying an edge mask as an alternative to Unsharp Mask

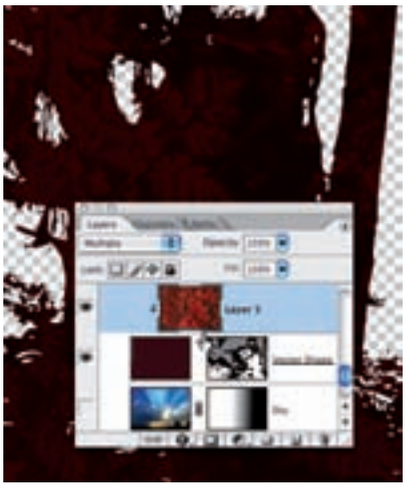
01 Fun with channels Switch to the Channels palette and pick the colour that has the most contrast. Duplicate this to create an alpha channel to work with and then use Find Edges from the Stylize set of filters to pick up and enhance hard edges in the image.

02 Invert and process Invert the colour channel from the Adjustments menu and choose Maximum from the Other set of filters. This thickens the lines. Smooth out some of the image noise using the Median filter and then use Levels to boost the black levels. Finally run a Gaussian Blur to soften the channel.

07 **Vector trees** To create a detailed vector mask we'll start by using Illustrator's Live Trace tool to convert a forest photograph into a complex illustration. You can easily draw vector shapes straight into a Photoshop vector mask, but this technique will give us the silhouetted style we're looking for.

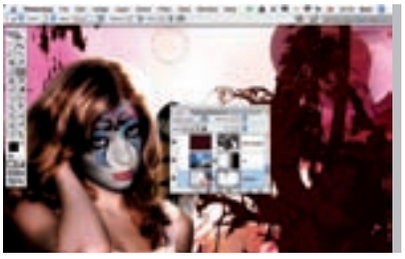


08 **Copy and paste** We can lift the artwork straight out of Illustrator by copying it. Now create a new layer in Photoshop and fill it with a solid colour. Add a vector mask from the Layer menu and paste in the illustration. The solid colour will be masked by the new vector shape.



09 **Vector clipping masks** We can easily combine a vector mask with a clipping mask. Create a new layer directly above the vector-masked layer, and check the Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask option. Paste a favourite texture into this layer and the vector shape on the lower layer will also mask it. Set the texture to Multiply.

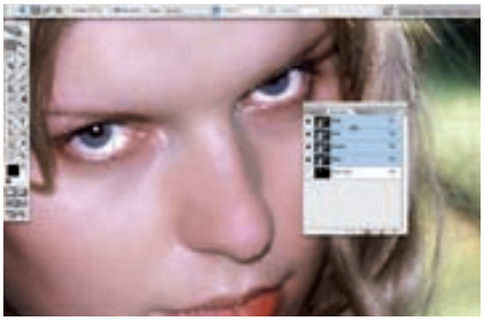
10 **Build up a background** To build up an interesting background we'll start with a base consisting of a solid gradient. This is a popular technique as it provides simple tonal variations to apply a series of textures to.



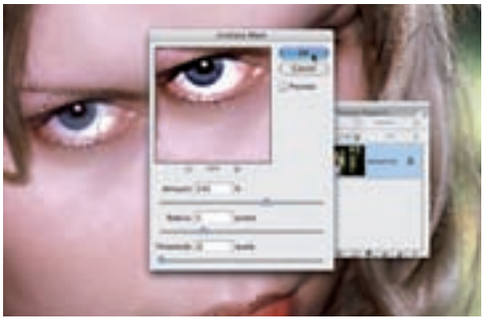
11 **Abstracts** We've added two photographs, one of a distorted cityscape and one of a cloudy sky. With this technique it's best to experiment with the apply modes and then add layer masks to help blend the images. We've started by masking the sky with a simple left to right greyscale gradient and then we can just clean up any visible edges of the cityscape using a soft, low opacity black brush on the layer mask.

12 **Layers** As you can see from this final shot, building up an image based around masks can result in quite complex files. This can be further compounded by the tendency for Photoshop to release layers from clipping masks if you make one wrong move. It's best to keep your layers clearly labelled and merge clipped layer sets when you want to commit to the artwork.

03 **Select** All this work has been to create a feathered selection comprising of only the edges in the image. Switch to the RGB (or CMYK) channel and then load the selection by Command clicking (Mac) or Ctrl-clicking (PC) your alpha channel. Now chose Inverse from the Select menu.



04 **Sharpen** With the inverted selection loaded, choose the Unsharp Mask filter and experiment with the settings to produce the desired sharpening effect. The results should give you a sharper image without emphasising the noise in flatter areas.



NEXT ISSUE | WE UNCOVER THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE CURVES PALETTE

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 1.5 hours

YOUR EXPERT
Kev Speck

ON THE CD
Source files

Make art from your old photos

Struggling to think of a new subject to photograph? No problem, break out those old holiday snaps you thought would never use and get creative!

Sometimes it is a little difficult to get going with an image, especially if you don't happen to have any particular brief or definite requirements that need to be met. It's exceptionally easy to get caught up with thinking about what new material you need in order to start on your next creative project, but the truth is you can squeeze lots of inspiration from old photos. For example, have you ever thought of trying to make an image out of old random photographs you have lying about?

I hadn't, until *Photoshop Creative* got in touch and challenged me to produce a piece of art based on three random photographs. Never one to turn down a challenge, I accepted – nervously – and waited to see what old snaps I would be presented with.

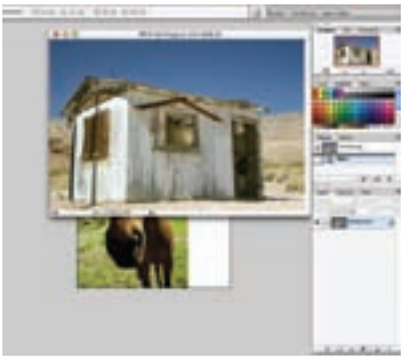
It could have been a bike, a bed and a bean bag, but it was in this instance a horse, a shed and a scenic desert picture. The subject matter is irrelevant; it's the opportunity to experiment with a minimal amount of source material, and produce something fresh you would never have prepared yourself.

If you keep things simple by duplicating layers and adjusting their properties, you'll be amazed at what can be achieved. Hopefully at the end of this tutorial you will be inspired to search around for your old photos and put yourself to the same challenge.

I'd love to see what you produce, and I invite you all to email me your own little random pieces of digital art. Of course, don't forget to send them into the magazine – the pictures I used are also part of this issue's Readers' Challenge, so show us what you're made of and how you would tackle these three photos!

PLAN AND ORGANISE

A little bit of forethought never did anyone any harm



01 Get your files out Open the random selection of photographs which are supplied on this issue's CD. Place them onto a new document, with the measurements 290mm x 240mm, resolution of 300dpi.

02 Plan your illustration on paper It doesn't hurt to quickly put pencil to paper and plan how you want your illustration to look. This is compulsory if you're working for clients, because they need an idea of what you're going to do. However, it's helpful to do at home and will provide a loose structure to work to.

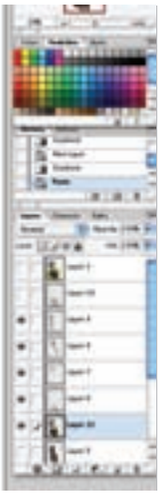
03 Time for the obvious… As always, there's going to be a certain amount of tracing. Start with the horse, and zoom in as close as possible (we zoomed in to 200%). Using the Polygonal Lasso tool, carefully click around the outline, finishing up with a nice selected area to work within.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

Expert Tip

Colour courage

It's easier to use colour in your illustrations when you have complete confidence in your work. Don't be scared to splash vivid and vibrant tones around. It will come with time and practice, but the more interesting work is usually the most colourful. Having said that though, colours should complement each other and fit within the image. It will look messy if you just use colour for the sake of it.

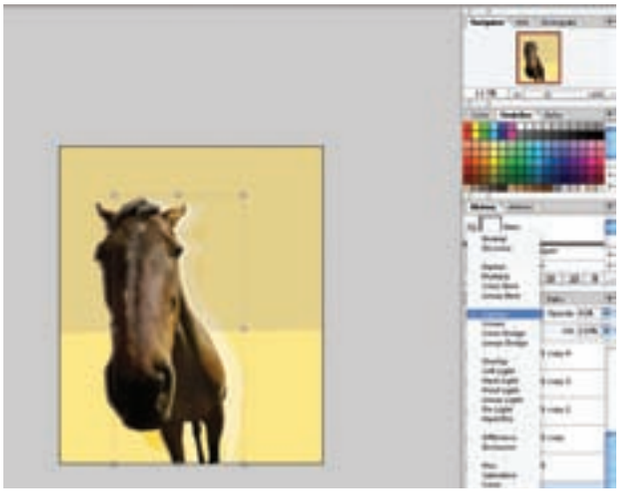


04 Fill that up with gradients Firstly fill your selected area on a brand new layer with a desired colour. Then switch the colour tool from Fill to Gradient, and using the '100% – 0%' gradient, draw new gradients inside the selected area. For example, start at the top right side of the horse and drag to the bottom left. Finish this step by copying and pasting your horse a few times.

05 Adjustments to be made Go back to the background layer of your document, select half the page and fill with yellow, select the other half and fill with another yellow. This is only temporary; we will be changing the upper half a little later on to a vivid blue. Select your colours from your swatch palette.

MOVE THE DIFFERENT LAYERS

Build up a shadow effect



06 Pad it up The gradients you created in step four will now serve several purposes. Some will stay as they are and others you will move around the horse to give it slightly more depth. When you move a layer, give it a different tone. Play with the opacities, but don't get too carried away. It's best to start with a few, and then the more confident you get, the more you can add.

07 That last step more thoroughly We used gradients to add tone to the horse's leg. Duplicate three of your previous gradients. Set them all to Color Burn and put the Opacity to 69%. Change the Hue/Saturation ever so slightly, and move them a fraction inside one another. This will give slight colour change and a real depth.

Tool School

Play with opacity

Always experiment with the Opacity slider in anything you do. You'll be amazed what a difference it can make and is a stupidly-easy way of getting a quick effect in your images.

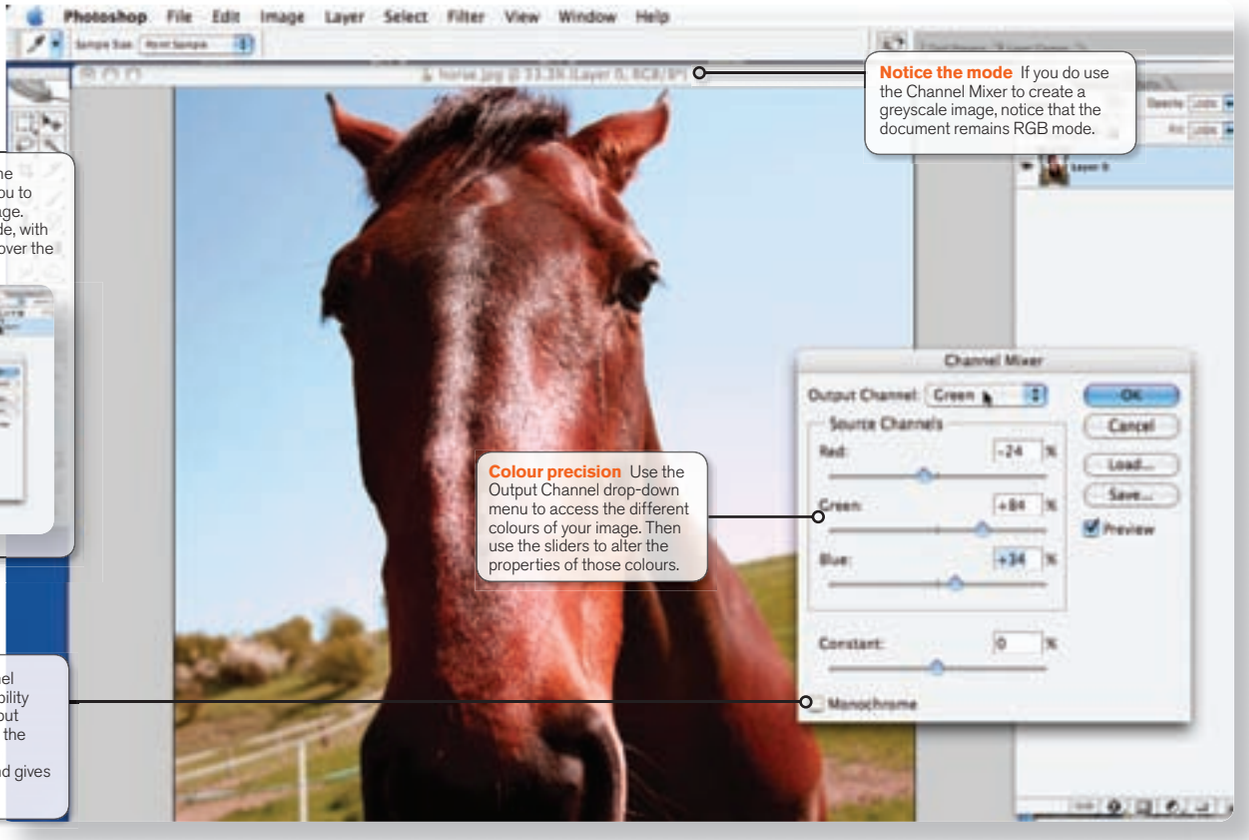
08 Cut it out Select a few of your unused layers that you duplicated earlier, and see how you can insert them into the image. The best way is to cut away sections of the layer; maybe a part behind the ear, or a section next to a leg. We've opted for the right-hand side of the horse, and cut half of the layer away.

09 Not enough colour Time to bring the final duplicated horse into the picture. We want to give it a little more colour. Desaturate the layer, and use Auto Contrast function. Go to Image> Adjustments>Channel Mixer and move the black tone up. Change the 'saturation' to orange and pick the Color Burn blending mode. Duplicate this layer, change the mode to Soft Light, and give it an Opacity level of 45%.

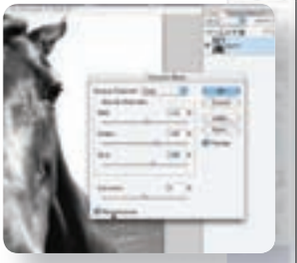
Colour control

Use the Channel Mixer to get perfect colour control

The Channel Mixer allows you to make supreme colour alterations and is something you should definitely investigate. Here's a closer look at what it does…



Why the Channel Mixer? The Channel Mixer is available for you to make the perfect greyscale image. Unlike using the Greyscale mode, with this you have complete control over the tones and highlights.



Notice the mode If you do use the Channel Mixer to create a greyscale image, notice that the document remains RGB mode.

Colour precision Use the Output Channel drop-down menu to access the different colours of your image. Then use the sliders to alter the properties of those colours.

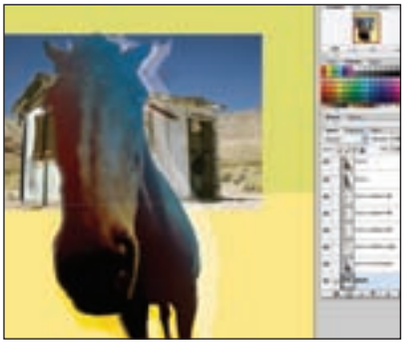
Monochrome In the Channel Mixer palette, you have th eability to take colour out as well as put it back in. Most people go for the Monochrome function, which changes the layer to black and gives attractive greyscale images.

LAST RACE

Put the final touches to the horse

10 Feeling blue Knowing that we are still yet to introduce the sky into the image, we'll get ahead of ourselves and lace some blue onto the horse. Find the layer with the gradient on the right-hand side of the horse. Select this layer and change its Hue/Saturation settings. Switch to Colorize, and choose a deep blue shade to wash over the horse. See the screenshot above for the colour we used.

11 Last section Now we want to bring out the horse's eyes. They have been lost underneath too many layers, so we need to bring them back to the surface. Trace around the eye area, fill with white, and then lower the opacity to somewhere between 20-30%. Repeat with the inside section of the eye, this time use Multiply, and a darker colour than white to fill.



12 Onto the next file Click on the shed file you opened at the beginning and trace around that now. Create a new layer, which will sit underneath all of the horse layers, and using the Eyedropper tool, select the yellow at the bottom of the page.

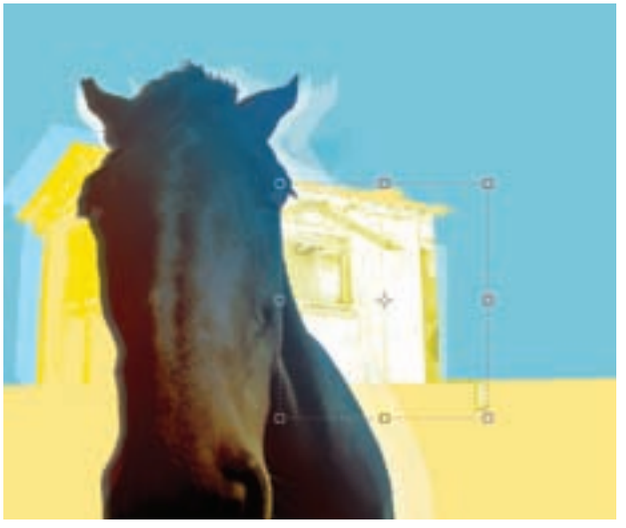
Expert Tip

Texture

When you're looking through old photos, look for interesting patterns and textures; not just obvious objects of focus. Adding texture to an image and playing around with blending modes can quickly bring depth and interest. There's bound to be a few surprises with how things turn out, but that's part of the fun.

13 Fill your shed Fill your new layer with your recently selected yellow, and it will make your shed look like it is part of the bottom layer. As we did for the previous layers, make a few new gradient layers inside as well before copying and pasting the shed itself.

14 Paint the sky Now the shed is set, go back to the top half of the yellow background. Seeing the horse and shed now, this should help you make a decision to pick a supporting shade of blue. Then take your gradients and like before, stagger around the subject matter, playing with its variables.



15 Shed depth Now use the copied layer of the shed, desaturate it and then alter its contrast and levels. Change the mode to Color Burn, to make it really blend in with the illustration. Duplicate this, and chop away some parts. Do this because we don't want to fill the whole shed, only sections of it on the right-hand side.

16 Shed photo Now we want to let some of the actual photo texture shine through in the illustration. Not too much; just enough to allow the viewer to identify the shed and its qualities. Put a separate shed layer as Lighten and change its opacity to somewhere below 60%.

Resources

Talk to illustrators

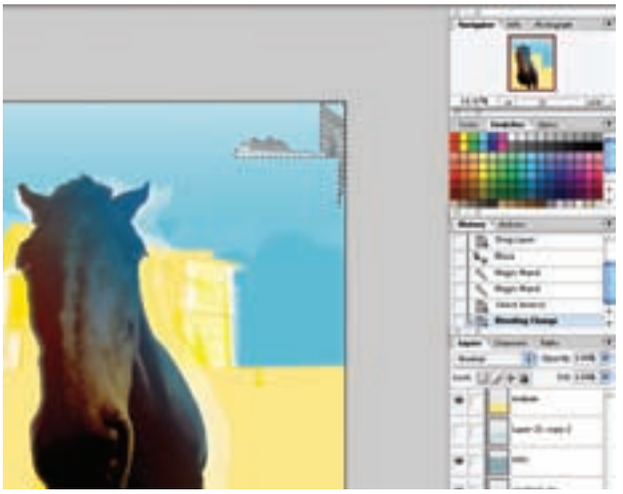
Pay a visit to the AOI web forum, which is a must for all professional illustrators. From discussing fees, showcasing, and giving advice on jobs, there are hundreds of fellow professionals on hand to share their advice. See **www.theaoi.com** for more.

17 Use the door Now we want to make a shed door. The actual door in the photo is fine, but let's create a new one. Trace around the window of the shed photo. Change to Color Dodge and take the opacity down to 90%, and place it as shown opposite.

18 Introduce the background Now to the last of the files. Place the background above everything so you can see it clearly. Trace around the mountain tops including the rest of the photo beneath them, select a new layer and fill with a darker shade of blue. Flip the layer horizontally, and place beneath the yellow layer.

INTRODUCE OTHER ELEMENTS

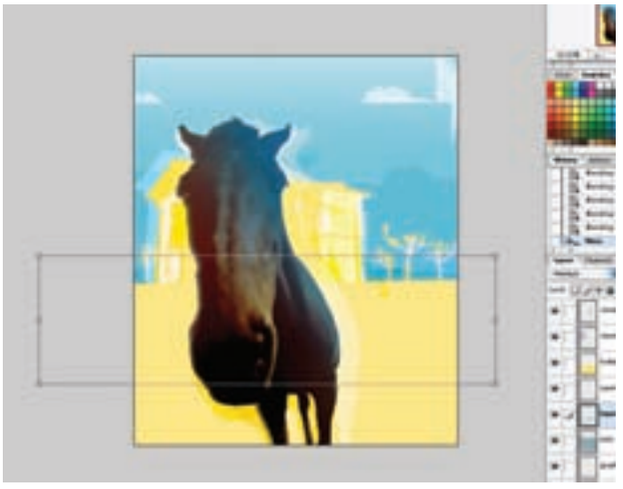
Extra touches for the final finish



19 Use other layers to make other things
Grab one of your shed copies and drag it over the mountain tops. Select the top section of the mountains with the Magic Wand, go back to your shed layer and cut away the bottom three-quarters so it resembles clouds. Move the layer to the sky, and Color Dodge. Create a new layer beneath, and place a white to clear gradient over the top.

20 Add some little tree touches Trace around the main tree in the background photo. You don't have to be perfect – just get your cursor round as quickly as you can. With it still selected, turn the photograph's visibility off and use the Eyedropper tool to select the yellow of the shed. Fill the tree on a new layer.

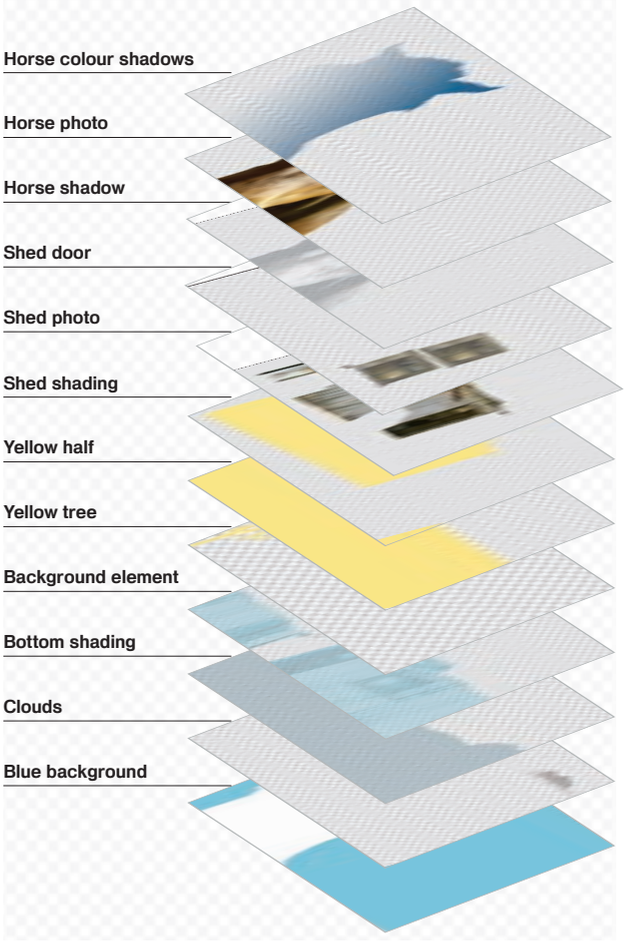
21 Get in line
The layer you've just created may look a little big, so go to Edit>Transform>Scale and reduce ever so slightly. When you're happy, reproduce this layer a couple more times. Move your new layers around the tree and reduce further to give the image perspective and depth. Now cut away randomly at certain branches so they don't all look like clones.



22 A little more blue
Last stage now, again using the same layers we've already created. Take your trusty old shed layer, move it beneath all the other shed layers, and turn to Multiply. Using Hue/Saturation, turn the layer to blue, and move all the way to the bottom of the mountain area to the back of the trees.

The layer structure

Building our equestrian experiment

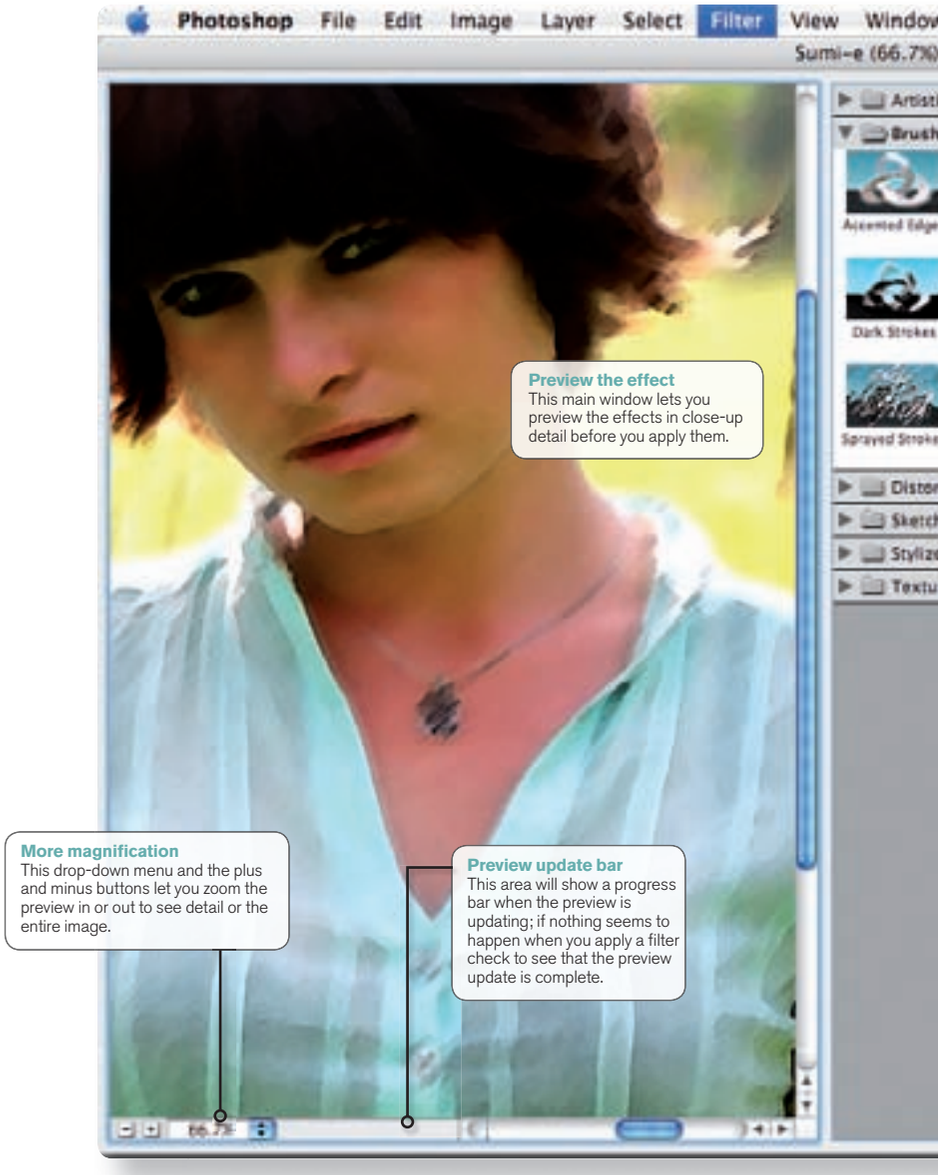


PHOTOSHOP FILTERS

Brush Strokes

Delving even further into our Photoshop filter toolkit brings us to the Brush Strokes options; perfect for mimicking natural media effects

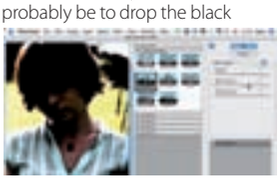
Photoshop's bevy of artistic filters are usually overused by enthusiastic dabblers or overlooked by cynical experts. True, most of them are quick click, obvious effects at first glance, but with a little tweaking they can produce creative and inspirational results. Trying to emulate natural media artwork with automated effects is never completely convincing, and the same criticisms that are levelled towards Photoshop's Artistic filters can also be directed at third party plug-ins and specialist software. Basically, filters just can't match the quality hands-on techniques such as those shown in this and other issues of *Photoshop Creative*. But although you'll never achieve professional results with the filters, the Artistic filters shown here can be fantastic starting points for more creative Art History or brush-based techniques and are therefore always worth experimenting with. The Crosshatch, Spatter Strokes and Sumi-e filters, in particular, can produce a great base to work upon, while the Sprayed Strokes filter can introduce interesting distortions to the image that work well under manually applied brush strokes. As with all filters, the initial results can be far too obvious, but spend a little time working up the image to introduce a little creativity and you'll produce wonderful results.


Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Select Filter View Window
Sumi-e (66.7%)
Preview the effect
This main window lets you preview the effects in close-up detail before you apply them.
More magnification
This drop-down menu and the plus and minus buttons let you zoom the preview in or out to see detail or the entire image.
Preview update bar
This area will show a progress bar when the preview is updating; if nothing seems to happen when you apply a filter check to see that the preview update is complete.

Dark Strokes

Take it as dark as you want

When you first click on it, the Dark Strokes filter may seem a tad overpowering, but as with all the Brush Strokes filters, it just takes a little bit of finessing to get a pleasing result. Use the Balance to control the shift between dark and light and then experiment with the Black and White intensity sliders. Your first instinct will probably be to drop the black intensity right down, but it can produce some beautiful soft, contrasty effects in the mid-ranges.

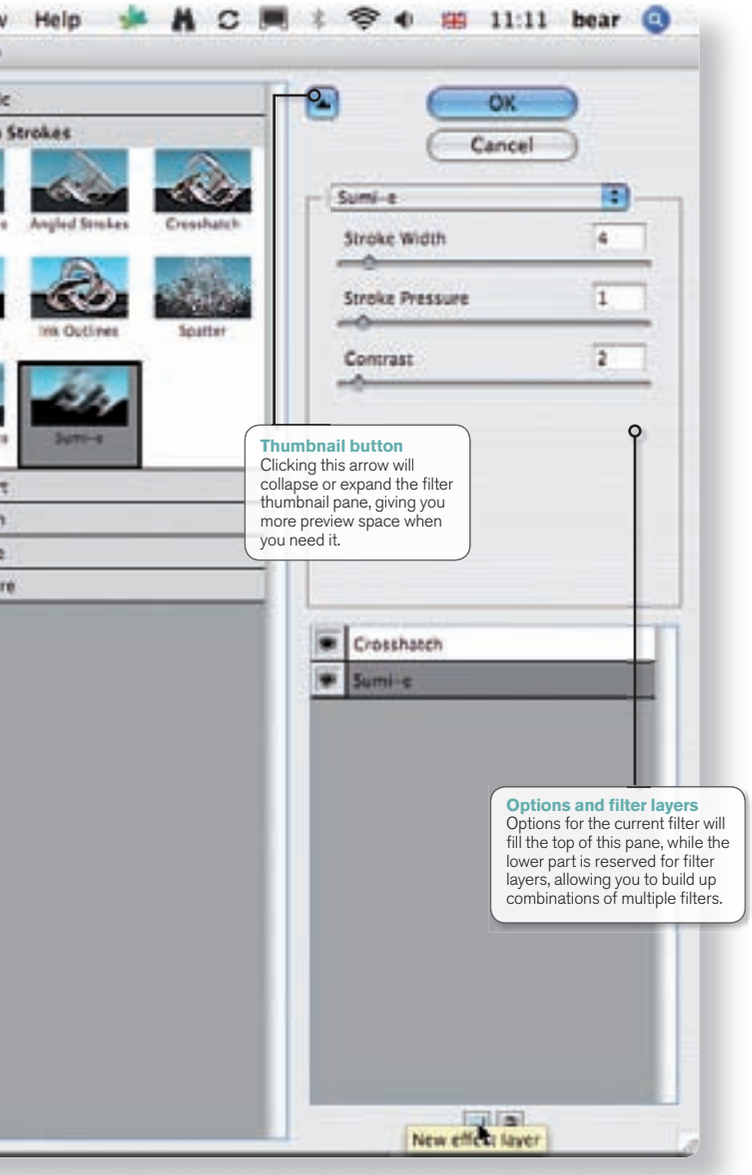


Sumi-e

Softly does it

Perhaps the most useful of the Brush Strokes filters; Sumi-e mimics the Japanese art of painting with wet brushes on highly absorbent rice paper. The result is a very soft, diffuse look where the colours bleed into one another and the blacks become very dense and rich. Like the other Brush Strokes filters, you might easily dismiss it at first because it paints over your image with thick black lines, but experiment with the Stroke Width and Contrast sliders and you should reach some very pleasing results.

NEXT ISSUE | A LOOK AT THE DISTORT FILTERS


Help
11:11
bear
OK
Cancel
Sumi-e
Stroke Width
Stroke Pressure
Contrast
Crosshatch
Sumi-e
Thumbnail button
Clicking this arrow will collapse or expand the filter thumbnail pane, giving you more preview space when you need it.
Options and filter layers
Options for the current filter will fill the top of this pane, while the lower part is reserved for filter layers, allowing you to build up combinations of multiple filters.
New effect layer

Tip

Mix and merge

Combinations of filter layers in the Filter Gallery aren't limited to their respective sets; for example you could combine a Sumi-e filter with Film Grain from the Artistic set. See below for how to build up layers of effects.

Brush Strokes in full

Have an image that you want to tweak but can't decide which Brush Stroke to use? Here's a handy guide to what all of them look like…

Accented Edges

Angled Strokes

Crosshatch

Dark Strokes

Ink Outlines

Spatter

Sprayed Strokes

Sumi-e

Building up filter layers

Harness the power of the Filter Gallery

The Filter Gallery isn't just about huge previews; the Effect Layer pane lets you combine multiple filters to apply in one batch.

01 **Start small**
Choose your first filter and tweak the settings to get the effect you're looking for. A layer for the filter you're working with appears in the Effects layers pane. To add a new layer, click the New Effect Layer button at the bottom.

02 **Mix it up**
Click a new filter to start working on the new layer. Toggle the previews of the separate layers by clicking the small eye buttons next to the layers to get an idea of how the filters are interacting. If you're unhappy with the results you can drag any of the layers down to the trashcan at the bottom to delete them.

Tip

Keep on moving

Dragging filter layers up and down the stack can change the way they interact, giving you even more control and creative freedom. Have a play and see what you acihieve.

Paint an Art Deco masterpiece

Take a journey into the world of jazz, decadence and free-thinking with our guide to re-creating a Tamara De Lempicka painting

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
A few hours

YOUR EXPERT
Hannah Gal

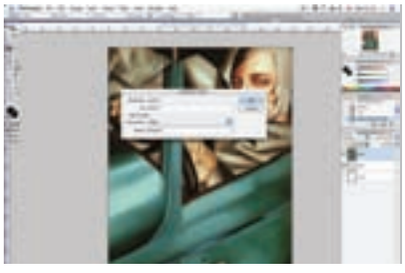
The Art Deco movement was all about travel, luxury and modernity, and the art of the day focused on bold angular forms and metallic colours. These represented the sleek world of the fashionable men and women. Tamara De Lempicka is an excellent example of the style. Born into a Polish upper-middle class family, she mingled in high social circles and could never be described as the poor struggling artist. She spoke French, took dancing lessons and could afford to be selective about her painting subjects. Her work could be described as a document of the ruling upper classes, who commissioned the artist's highly aesthetic and polished look.

The self-portrait of Lempicka, which we're re-creating here, is one of her most famous pieces. Created in 1929, *Self-Portrait in the Green Bugatti* shows the artist nonchalantly sat by the steering wheel, dressed in a modern lady driving outfit and helmet. The image carries typical sensuality, with heavy but 'cool' eyes, reflecting the look and antics of the Jazz Age.

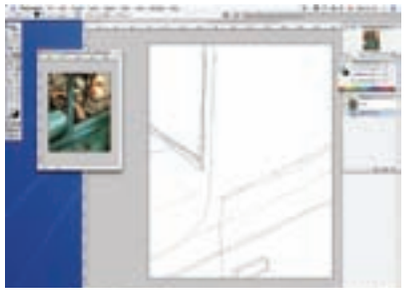
We will re-create the piece to trace Lempicka's smooth paint application process. We start with a drawing of the artist sat in her car and use guides for correct compositing. Once that is in place, the work consists of airbrushing layer upon layer of paint. The same tools will create the flow of fabric, the lazy gaze of the eyes, and cherry red mouth. Photoshop's own filters will add a metallic shine to the car and canvas texture. With painting complete and texture in place, Lighting Effects will add a touch of smoothing light to the piece.

SET UP THE CANVAS

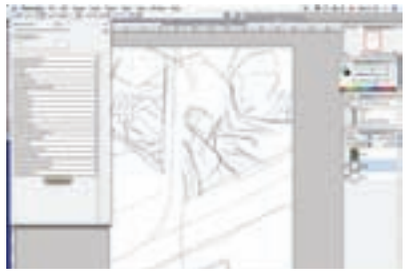
Doing the groundwork



01 Duplicate layer Open a new file 240mm wide by 290mm high. Note that the proportions are slightly different from the original. Search online for De Lempicka's *Self Portrait With a Bugatti.* Look for the largest file with the most detail and paste into your main file as a layer. With this layer selected, go to Layer>Duplicate Layer>New, and name as Original. Place the new picture next to your main file for reference.



02 Guide lines Go to View>Rulers. Use these guides as you build your image. The car's vertical line of the windscreen for example, is just off-centre, so position it at the 10cm mark. Open a new layer, name it Guide Drawing and select the Pencil tool. Set a size of 40 and Opacity of 20. Draw the outlines of the car – as you can see this just needs to be rough.



03 Compose your image Start to copy the composition. Use the lines drawn in the previous step as guides to help get size and proportions right. If using a graphics tablet, now is the time to adjust Pressure, Tilt and other settings. Even at this early stage, apply lines sensitively, carefully observing the changes in thickness and brightness. These subtleties will be of great help as you apply colour later on.

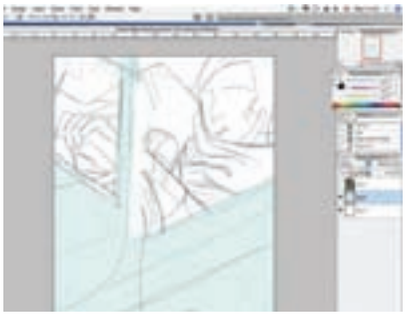
WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3.0 AND ABOVE

Working with light

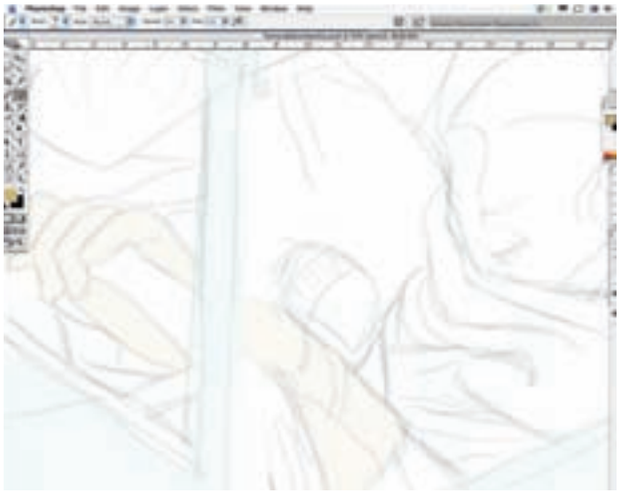
When light falls on a subject, it creates many tones and subtleties. This means that lines are rarely rigid and uniform throughout. From the very beginning, draw and apply paint with sensitivity and dynamics. An insensitive application of pencil/paint tends to look like a child's drawing lacking nuance and variety.

PAINT TO CANVAS

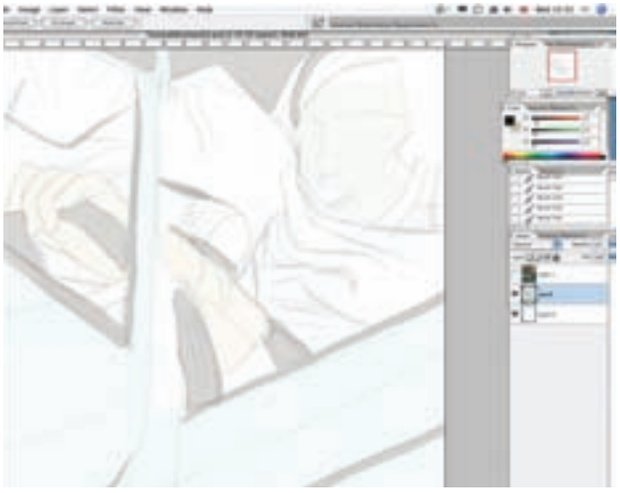
With the outline in place, it's time to start filling with



04 **The green Bugatti** Go to Brushes>Wet Media>Watercolour Light Opacity. Set Opacity to 50 and start applying colour to the car. Open the Color palette for the right shade of green, or sample from the original. Cover the entire car using a 200 brush for the main body and a small, 30 for the windscreen frame.



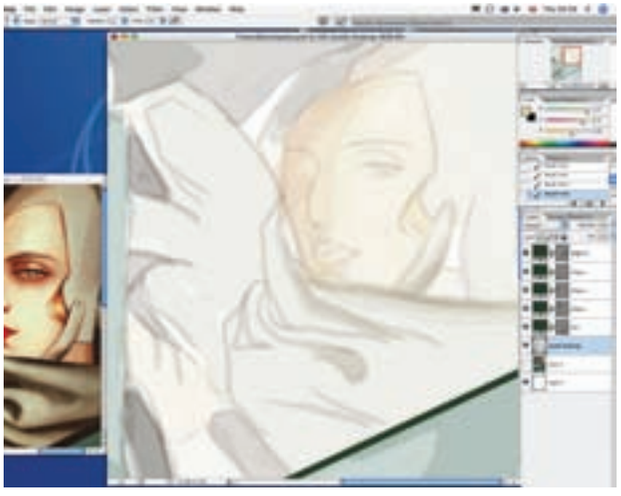
05 **Elegant glove** Sample the yellow/brown colour of the glove in the original and using the same Light Opacity, Watercolour brush, colour the glove resting over the wheel. As the colour of the glove is similar to the artist's face, you can safely cover that as well.



06 **Dark areas** The image has well defined dark areas, which sets the tone of the piece. Staying with low, 30 – 40 opacity, fill in these areas. This all-over colouring is a rough guide, setting the scene for later stages. Use the brush to freely cover different areas but don't worry about getting the minute details to size.

07 **Straight lines** Select the Line tool to inject colour into the straight lines you drew earlier. Sample dark green or brown from the original painting, or use the colour palette. Use a 30px line to cover the car's vertical lines on the door and also the windshield.

08 **Setting the tone** The car's body is made of many shades of green. Use the Color Picker to sample shades of green off the original. While closely observing the latter, apply lighter green first, gradually moving to darker. Use the Eye Dropper to sample different shades as you progress, aiming for gradual transitions of colour. These will be smoothed out later.



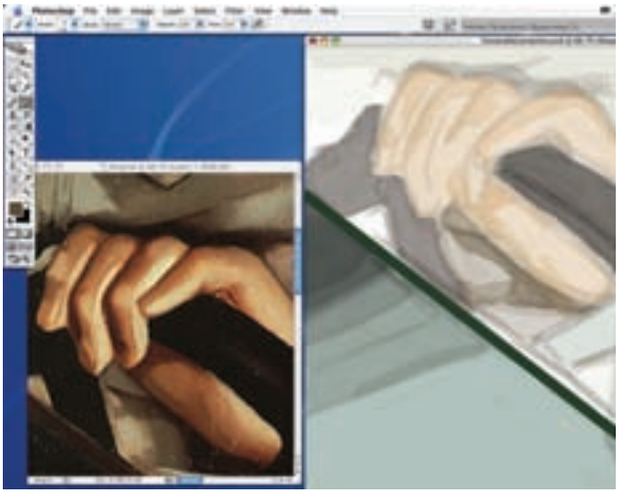
09 **The face** With a low Opacity of 11 and brush size of 91, trace the different shades of yellow/brown on the woman's face. Although just a guide layer, this is an important step as you familiarise yourself with the image subtleties. Even though this layer will be heavily blended with darker layers, as in the previous step, aim for smooth and clean transitions. Use long, soft strokes in line with the original.

Tool School

Valuable tool

A graphics tablet is the single most significant tool you can get to dramatically improve your work. It will enhance every aspect of creative life and enable subtlety and control that are simply not available with a mouse. You use a pencil-like tool, controlling every aspect of the tool and its application, most notably, Pressure Sensitivity and Tilt. Check out **www.wacom.com** for some of the best.

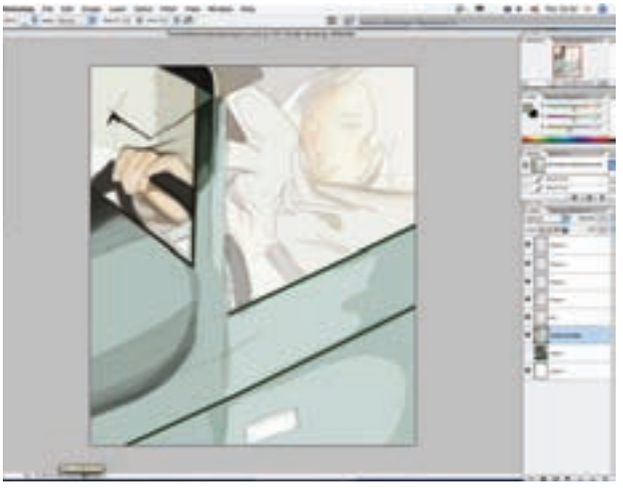
NOTES | GRAPHICS TABLETS DON'T HAVE TO COST THE EARTH – TURN TO PAGE 89 FOR DETAILS ABOUT AN ENTRY-LEVEL MODEL



10 Glove detail Zoom in on the glove resting over the steering wheel. Move up to a 40% opacity and apply the different shades of yellow/brown. Most importantly, observe the original closely for subtle changes in tone and lightness. Choose a starting point and paint the area, now use the Hand tool to drag the image along slightly as you move to the neighbouring one.

11 Surrounding area The painting process is an organic one. Even though we are using a method to re-create the piece, a dynamic approach and sensitivity are the keys to a convincing artwork. As you work on a zoomed-in area like the glove, feel free to 'stray' to apply colour to surrounding ones. It will increase flow and ensure a more unified look.

12 Detail This is the most demanding part of the re-creation – slowly applying stroke after stroke of paint to build up the image. Continue to zoom in on different areas of the image and apply a low opacity layer of paint. Pay attention to little details as you encounter them. Be dynamic and change brush size and opacity continuously, according to need. Name and save your brushes for simple loading every time.



13 Step back It is important to remember to step back and take a good overall look at the piece. Painters take a few steps back from their canvas to correctly assess progress. Do this regularly and you will be able to spot mistakes before it's too late. This is doubly important when working digitally as when you work at 100% magnification, other parts of the image are not in view.

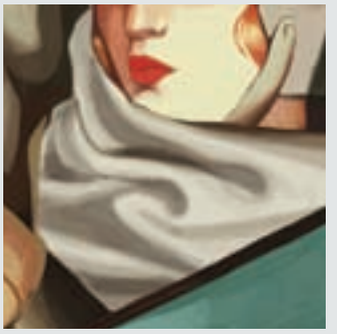
PAINTING FABRIC

Apply natural light effects

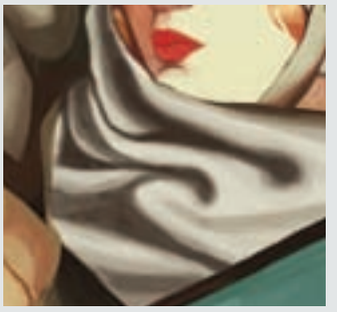
Real fabric has flow and softness to it. It is made of a multitude of shades from dark black at the folds, to the bright highlights at the peaks. The darker areas usually create a shape where the fabric folds and shadow is cast. To create realistic fabric, the many midtones found in the peak and the heart of the fold need to be captured. These give the material its 3D look.

Any soft brush at minimum Hardness is ideal and Watercolour Light Opacity is suitable for fabric. Go to Brushes>Wet Media Brushes and select Watercolour Light Opacity. Set Hardness to minimum and you have a nice round and soft brush to work with.

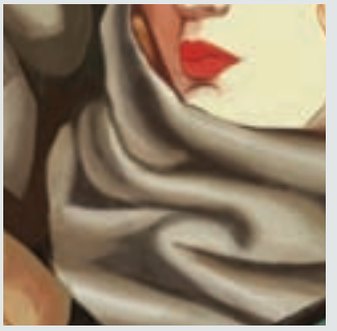
After you trace the many contours of the material, mark the well defined shaded areas and fill them in. Turn to the midtones that are in-between the dark fold and light peaks and fill these in. Finally touch up the high peaks. Keep the strokes long and smooth to reflect the flow of the fabric in the original.



01 Brush settings Set Opacity to 30. Following the drawing, start to fill in the shadow areas of the fabric. Work slowly, with sensitivity and long strokes. Follow the flow of the fabric.



02 Dark folds Increase Brush Opacity to 65 and go over the darkest areas again. When you finish this layer, increase opacity yet again and mark the darkest black contour lines. Adjust your pressure, accommodating variation in thickness and shade.



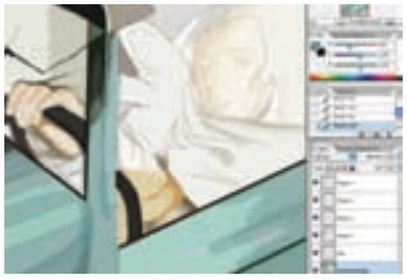
03 And everything in-between It's time to fill in the midtone areas – those that are between the shadows and the light peaks. Apply with long strokes that follow the direction of the fabric. This will add to the illusion of depth.

Smooth operator

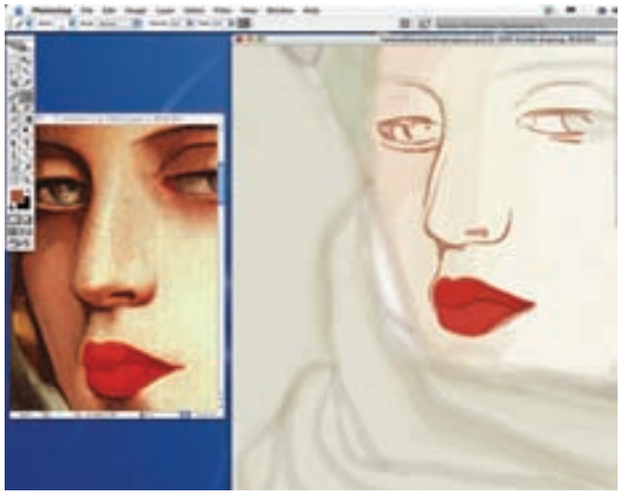
The last step of every paint application process involves smoothing out the edges. These may be the borders between one area and another, or unsightly, overly visible single strokes. The latter is easy to smooth out using the popular Smudge tool. Transition from one shade to a neighbouring one should be gradual. To achieve this, find a shade that is in-between two areas, and apply at very low opacity over the border. Repeat at low opacity until there is a smooth transition and no visible lines.

USING THE AIRBRUSH

Add tone and depth to the digital painting



14 Airbrush Go to the History palette and create a New Snapshot (Elements users will have to skip this step). Select the Airbrush tool and set a 50% Opacity. You will now apply darker layers, going over the previous colour layers. This step requires greater confidence but the Snapshot gives you the option to revert. This step will give the piece greater definition. Set the Flow or Opacity level to one you feel most comfortable with.



15 Parisian cool To capture the atmosphere of the piece, it is important to get the correct facial expression. If unsure of your drawing skills, trace the contours of the eyes in the Original layer, and paste into the main piece. Transform to size. Reduce Opacity to 50 and select the Guide Drawing layer. Lightly trace the contours of the eyes, carefully filling in any dark areas. Turn off the pasted layer.

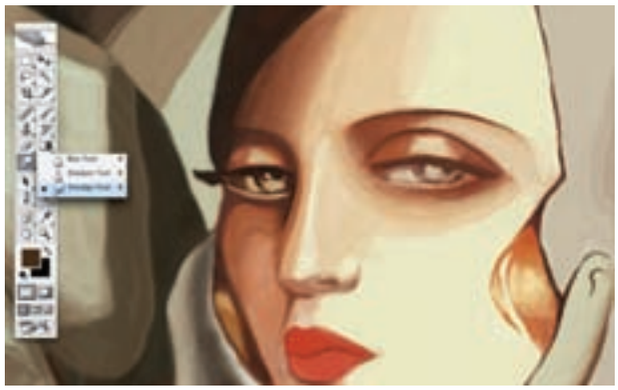
16 Parisian lips Using the Airbrush tool, tend to the hair and build up layers of red on the lips. Just like the eyes, the mouth is a prominent, atmospheric feature in the piece. The smallest mistake here will create a different face altogether. The right level of colour, correct tone and proportions are crucial to accurate copying.

17 Build up the paint Add layer upon layer to your painting, increasing brush opacity as your confidence grows. Sample the darkest black in the original and with a small brush, sensitively paint over dark contours. Once you set the black of the wheel and contours of the face, you can sample and apply the lightest shades.

18 Fabric The softness of the fabric is in complete contrast to the hard metal surface of the car. The softness is created by shadows and highlights suggesting the feeling of folding fabric. Start by going over the darkest lines of your drawing, and then slowly fill in dark areas. Add layer upon layer of shade to dark areas, and then do the same for highlights and midtones.

19 Shiny metal The surface of the car has a slight metal sheen. To create this effect, select the highlight area with a selection tool and set Feather at 20. Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise and add Uniform Noise, Monochromatic. Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and apply an Angle of 75-85 degrees.

NEXT ISSUE | PUCKER UP AS WE REVEAL HOW TO RE-CREATE KLIMT'S *THE KISS*



20 **Smudge it up** When you've finished applying paint, fix the unclean transitions. These go against Art Deco's stylised philosophy. Create a New Snapshot and then choose the Smudge tool, set at full opacity, and go over the border lines to smooth out the transition.

21 **Canvas** Go to Filter>Artist>Rough Pastels>Canvas. Adjust Stroke Length and other parameters until you see the filter generate little brush strokes. Now go to Filters>Texturiser, set Texture to Canvas and apply at 80% Scaling and set Relief to 8. It is best to try the effect on a small selection first. When you reach ideal settings, deselect, select all, and reapply.

22 **Lighting Effects** Go to Filter>Render>Lighting Effects. Set Light Type to Spotlight, Focus to Wide, and apply a touch of overall enhancing, smoothing light to the image. This is optional but it does add a touch of atmosphere to the piece.

Tip

Try and ye shall prosper

There is no better way to familiarise yourself with a brush's look and nature than experimentation. Choose different brushes, adjust Diameter and Hardness, Texture, Wet Edges, Smoothing and other presets to see their effect. Look at Jitter, Scale and Depth and how they affect different brushes. It's worth doing because the better you know the brushes, the easier brush design and paint application will be.

THE ART DECO STYLE

Celebrating all things modern

Art Deco was a movement that encompassed all aspects of life, not just the art world. You could see its influence in everything from decorative to industrial arts, from skyscrapers and ocean liners, to toasters and furniture.

Originating shortly before World War I, the term has originally referred to French luxury goods' style of design, and became internationally popular during the 1920s and '30s. Unlike other art movements, Art Deco artists did not form a coherent community but shared a common vision and painting philosophy. The artists tried to reflect on the sleekness of the machine age, with geometric patterns and long thin forms.

Art Deco artists had a wide range of influences, from Primitive arts of Africa, Ancient Greek sculpture, Jazz, animal motifs, machine age, technology and much more. Famous monuments that capture the essence of the style include New York's Rockefeller Center, the Radio City Music Hall and the Chrysler Building.

De Lempicka was truly an individual operator whose work reflects the movement's stylised form and philosophy of defined patterns. Her bold clear style epitomises the polished look of the time. When you look at her paintings, one thing to notice is the clean colours and the limited palette. Another important element in her work, which is not necessarily an Art Deco feature is decadence. With this, she most probably reflected on her own upbringing and lifestyle. It also marks another De Lempicka trait, which is her independent spirit. She continued working in the style long after the demise of the Art Deco, and seems to have completely ignored Cubism; another prominent movement of the Twenties.

Chrysler Building

Radio City Music Hall

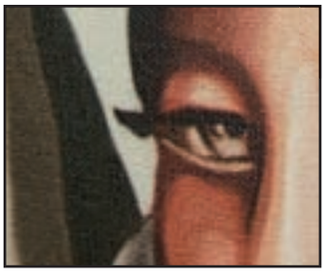
Using a graphics tablet, such as the Wacom Intuos3, is the best way of getting superior results with your digital painting

Print your images to canvas!

Give your creations the final finish by getting them printed onto canvas. Here we show you how to use the PhotoArtistry site

Your stretched canvas comes ready to hang

10 READERS get their work printed FREE!



The texture of the canvases is really impressive

All canvases are finished to high standards

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

10 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Jo Cole

Nothing quite beats a nice glossy printout of some art to add interest to a room. Whether it's an illustration or stunning photo, a few well-placed prints can be all you need to transform a dull living space into something that's infinitely more welcoming. However, it seems a shame to buy somebody else's work if you've created some special pieces of art yourself. To get the most out of your photos or illustrations, get them printed out using the PhotoArtistry service. This company will take your image file and print it out onto a variety of mediums, all of which offer exceptional results. As well as the straightforward photoglossy and semi-gloss prints, you can also choose to have your image converted into a poster, and maybe take advantage of the MDF block mounting option. This is where printouts are mounted onto 18 or 12mm MDF blocks and you can choose to have the edges of the block painted matte black, white emulsion or left as natural MDF. But our favourite part of the service – and the focus of this tutorial – is the canvas printing option. With this, your image is printed onto 340gsm matte canvas that meets the Fine Art Trade Guild's standards. The inks used are guaranteed to remain crisp for over 75 years and each print is heat-sealed to give extra protection against scratches and splashes. If you decide to go the canvas route, we'd also suggest taking advantage of the canvas stretching service, where your print is expertly stretched onto quality stretcher bars so it's ready to hang.

We're going to show you how to place an order at the site, from prepping your image for submission through to deciding which options to go for. The quality of the product really is impressive – we had the Art Deco piece from the previous tutorial printed onto stretched canvas and were blown away by the results. Colours were rich, the finish was impeccable and it looked like a real painting. Visit **www.photoartistry.co.uk** to see how you can turn your files into professional prints, or enter our competition to win a free canvas!

WORKS WITH | ANY VERSION OF PHOTOSHOP

PREP AND UPLOAD YOUR FILES

Getting your work to PhotoArtistry

01 Into Photoshop Before you send your image off to be printed, there's a bit of Photoshop work to do. First up is saving it for submission. Open your file up and go to Image>Mode. Submissions have to be RGB so make sure yours is. Now you need a trip to Image>Image Size. If you're using Elements, go to Image>Resize>Image Size.

02 Check the numbers add up If you want to email the file, you need to get it less than 2MB. If you're uploading to the site, as we are here, it needs to be under 50MB. To bring the file size down, click Resample Image and with Constrain Proportions selected, enter a new size. If your file is huge you can post it to PhotoArtistry on a CD. It's worth paying attentions to the resolution, too. The minimum is 150dpi, but 300 is a better option. For photos, use the Superfine setting or the highest res available.

03 Save the file When you've made your size adjustments, make a note of the dimensions of the document, in inches, and press OK. Now go to File>Save As and give the file an obvious name. The file format depends on your submission method – for email submission, go for JPEG and then compress. For uploading, if you can get away with TIFF and stay under 50MB, then do that. CD submissions should be TIFF files.

04 Start the order Go to **www.photoartistry.co.uk** and click on the Services tab. Here's where you can get more information about the different prints on offer. To get an idea of price, click the Price Calculator link.

05 Your measurements And here is why you needed to make a note of the dimensions in step three! Enter them in the relevant boxes and then pick the type of print you want from the drop-down menu. When that's done, just hit Calculate Price to see how much it will be. If you'd like a different currency, use the options on the side.

06 Commence with the order You'll see a price for the order. To submit your image, click the Submit your Image button, click Choose File on the page that appears and then click Upload File. This could take a couple of minutes, depending on your connection. Press your browser's Back button and enter the name of your file. Fill out the rest of the form, click Add To Basket and when you've checked that everything is correct, click Checkout.

07 The final furlong Here's the final, final order. Click either Cheque With Order or Pay Online. If you go the cheque way, you'll be presented with a form to print out and send off with your cheque. If you go the online way, you'll be taken to the secure WorldPay site to fill in your card details and finish the order.

Expert Tip

Clean and supreme

If there is any question over the quality of your file, PhotoArtistry will contact you to make sure it's okay to go ahead. Similarly, if there are hair, dust marks or scratches on your image, the company will ask if you want them removed. It'll also get rid of red-eye.

WIN!

WIN A CANVAS PRINT!

Ten readers can win a beautiful canvas print of their work

We were so enamoured with the canvas we got back from the PhotoArtistry site that we spoke to the PhotoArtistry team and arranged a special competition where ten lucky readers will receive a stretched canvas print. Send us a CD with the file you would like to turned into a canvas, give us a few lines about what the image is, how you made it and why you like it so much and the best ten will be forwarded onto PhotoArtistry to be transformed. There is no minimum size, but please make sure the file is no larger than 60cm x 40cm. The deadline for entries is 20 December 2005.

Please post your CDs to Canvas Competition, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset. BH2 6EQ.

Unfortunately we cannot return your CDs. You can also email your entries to **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**, but please keep emails below 2MB otherwise they will be rejected.

Terms & Conditions: Employees of Imagine Publishing (inc freelancers), PhotoArtistry their relatives or any agents cannot enter. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash.

Set up a graphics tablet

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
10 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
BWB

To get the best out of your graphics tablet, you need to set things up properly. Here are the best settings for getting perfect results with Photoshop

There's never been a better time to buy a graphics tablet. The industry leader, Wacom, has just updated its entry-level Graphire range and you can now pick up a tablet that will do all you ask of it (and more) for £75. Of course these updates also mean that you can pick up older models on the second-hand market, making your first steps into the world of graphics tablets even cheaper.

Although they are beloved by professionals, graphics tablets are exceptionally easy to use and shouldn't be overlooked by the home user. A graphics tablet really does give you an unprecedented amount of control over your Photoshop work, simply because you swap a clunky mouse for a more natural-feeling pen. This makes everything from using the brushes to making a selection with a lasso tool much easier. Installing the software that comes with your graphics tablet is nice and simple – it's just a case of popping in a CD and following the instructions. Once the software is taken care of, you can theoretically start scribbling away but you'd be missing the joy of a graphics tablet, especially if it's a Wacom tablet. There are a host of other hidden settings in Photoshop that let you use your tablet to a supreme level. The pressure sensitivity is particularly noteworthy because it allows you to adjust brush size just by pressing harder or lighter on the pen. You can also alter the flow of paint.

Over these pages we're going to show you how to get your graphics tablet geared up for success. We've used a Wacom Graphire here, but if you have an Intuos model, things are pretty much the same.

ALL SYSTEMS GO

Get the basic settings out of the way

01 **In System Preferences** After installing your graphics tablet and pen, you are ready to customise its settings for the most beneficial use in Photoshop. Firstly open your System Preferences. When the full menu appears, you will see a Pen Tablet symbol. You need to click on this.

02 **Some explaining to do** You'll see a window with options for setting up the tablet. The Eraser Feel slider adjusts the sensitivity of the eraser, from a large area and lighter touch to a smaller and more controlled eraser. The Tip Feel slider lets you adjust the sensitivity of your pen tip; the same as the Eraser Feel slider.

03 **Using the buttons** The Side Button functions let you assign options to the buttons on your pen, most of which are self-explanatory. There is also a Keystroke, Modifier and Pop-up menu Selection, which we will talk about in later steps.

04 **Further options** Select Click Sound to hear a click sound whenever your pen comes close to your tablet. The Double Click Distance slider sets the speed and area in which you can double-click; the larger, the easier it is. Go to Tracking (Pen Mode) to map your tablet to your monitor. Click Full under Tablet Area.

05 **Shortcuts without your keyboard** Note the three options at the top of the Pen tablet menu. The Pop-up Menu allows you to assign shortcuts or 'keystrokes' to the buttons on the pen. For example, we have added copy and paste functions.

06 **Simple but effective** These changes make a marked difference. We have pulled the Eraser Feel slider to the softer end for a broader stroke and lighter touch, and we have pulled the Tip Feel slider ever so slightly to the firm end for a more controlled and precise stroke. At this point there is no need to alter the Double Click Distance or the Tracking for the pen.

07 **The BWB way** Here at BWB we found setting the duoswitch to Pressure Hold (bottom button) was useful for brush strokes. When the button is pressed, the brush will stay at that current level until clicked again. Click-Lock is also good because it makes tasks such as selecting, cropping, painting, and cloning very easy indeed.

08 **The double modifier** Another option for setting up your pen is to use the Shift and Control keys. Keep your settings the same as in step seven but change both your duoswitch to Modifier. Each time you do this, a menu will appear with a number of tick boxes; tick the Shift box for the bottom button and Control for the top. This helps constrain proportions while resizing, cropping, finding, selecting and duplicating layers.

09 **Why reach for your keyboard?** For the third variation, try changing your Tip Feel slider to the soft end of the scale, giving a broader stroke. Now change one end of the duoswitch to Double-Click and the other end to Pop-up Menu, as explained in step five. This allows you to carry out keyboard shortcuts without actually using the keyboard, making cutting, pasting, copying and zooming incredibly easy.

Expert Tip

Relax!

We have all been using pens to draw from an early age. Except for the technology involved, the principles of using a graphics pen are exactly the same; the firmer the pressure, the darker and thicker the mark you will make.

Tool School

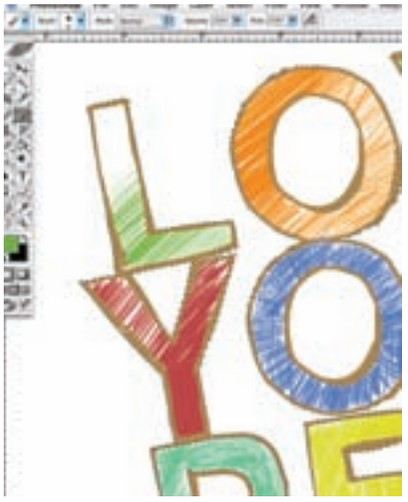
Position properly

Keep referring back to your tablet, to make sure it is at the right angle to your hand holding the pen. This is so you can navigate the cursor on the screen with absolute precision. If it isn't aligned properly you will find the cursor will draw on a slant from your pen.

IF THIS HAS WHETTED YOUR APPETITE FOR TABLET ACTION, TURN TO PAGE 88 FOR OUR REVIEW OF WACOM'S GRAPHIRE4 | **NOTES**

PUTTING IT IN PRACTICE

You've got the settings, now use them!



10 **Experimenting in Photoshop** Now you have a choice on how your pen is set up, it's time to put these combinations to the test. Open Photoshop, select the Brush tool, choose a colour and try some simple sketching techniques. Open the Brush palette and click on one of the Dynamics boxes. In the Control menu, pick Pen Pressure. Now the harder you press, the darker the effect!

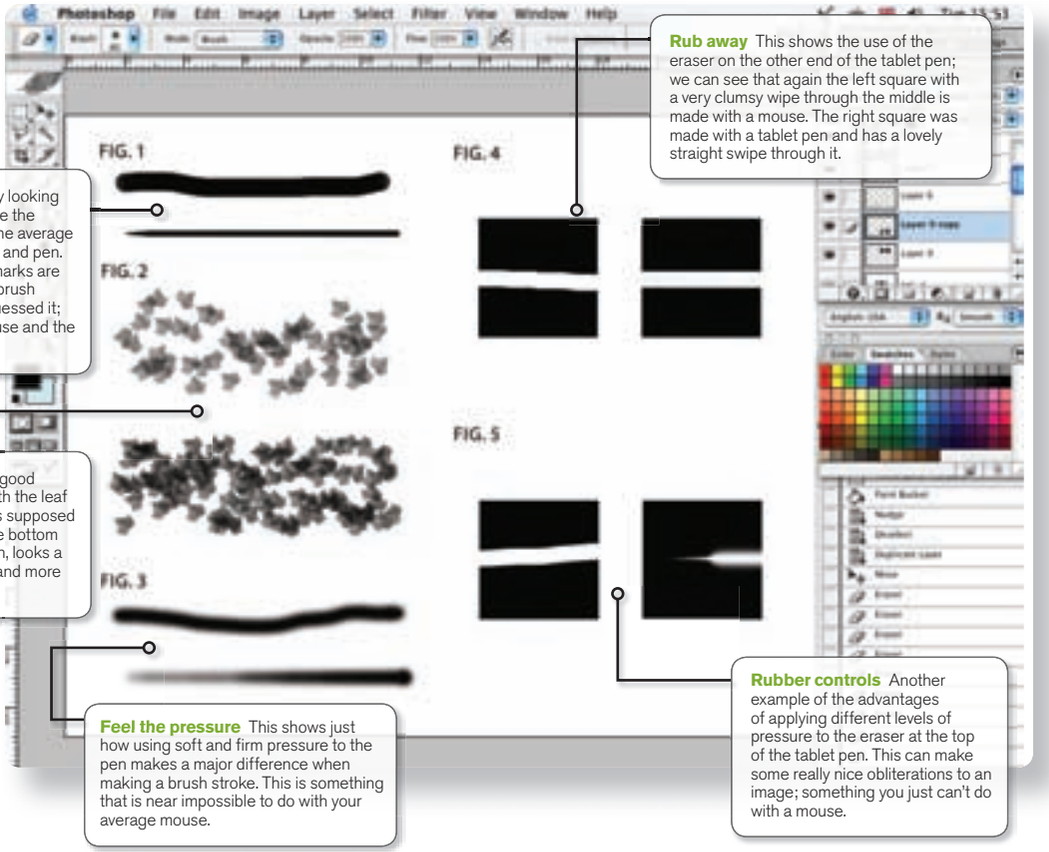
11 **Flowing textures** Once you feel comfortable with the pen's pressure and sensitivity, you can have a go at creating some flowing textures. Choose the Special Effects brush preset and pick the butterfly. Draw with different pressures creating larger and smaller, denser and sparser marks.

12 **Transform shapes the quick way** Now try adding a few shapes to an image, but copy and paste them using your 'pop-up menu' duoswitch on the side of your pen. Do this a number of times, scatter them around the image then, using your 'pop-up menu' duoswitch, scale and rotate your shapes. Notice how easy it is without using your keyboard shortcuts.

The wonder of a tablet

Here we show the kinds of great effects a tablet can give

If you're still in two minds about whether to buy a tablet or not, here's a look at what a tablet can do compared to what a mouse can do



Compare and contrast By looking at the screen grab we can see the comparison between using the average mouse, and a graphics tablet and pen. Believe it or not, this pair of marks are made with exactly the same brush stroke size and brush. You guessed it; the top was made with a mouse and the bottom with a tablet pen.

Go with the flow Here's a good example of making marks with the leaf shape. Although this shape is supposed to flow in an irregular way, the bottom line, which is made by the pen, looks a lot more pleasing to the eye and more controlled overall.

Feel the pressure This shows just how using soft and firm pressure to the pen makes a major difference when making a brush stroke. This is something that is near impossible to do with your average mouse.

Rub away This shows the use of the eraser on the other end of the tablet pen; we can see that again the left square with a very clumsy wipe through the middle is made with a mouse. The right square was made with a tablet pen and has a lovely straight swipe through it.

Rubber controls Another example of the advantages of applying different levels of pressure to the eraser at the top of the tablet pen. This can make some really nice obliterations to an image; something you just can't do with a mouse.

Expert Tip

Work as you please

When using a smaller graphics tablet, for example A5 size, for extra comfort try placing it on your lap instead of your computer desk, like you would with a note book. Remember there are no rules or regulations on using a tablet and pen.

eMag™

BLOSSOM BEFORE

BLOSSOM AFTER

Delete noise from photos

Don't suffer from the peril of pixellation; you can easily dispose of noise with the help of Photoshop

It's a sad fact of life that images taken by digital cameras always contain a certain level of noise. This noise shows up as pixelation or grain that isn't part of the image detail. An image that suffers from noise will have individual pixels or small groups of pixels that stand out among their neighbour pixels in regions of otherwise smooth colour, creating a dusty image that appears to have a lower resolution than it actually is. Exactly how much noise you can see depends on the camera's quality and as you'd expect, the higher the megapixels, the higher your chances of not having a 'noisy' image. However, it's not just the resolution of a camera that can affect an image's chance of noise; a camera's settings also have to accept some responsibility. When you shoot with high ISO settings, you expand your creative options and get the ability to capture some difficult pictures, mainly being able to shoot in low light conditions. This extra creativity does come at a cost, though. Raising the ISO of your camera will also raise the level of noise in your image. It's not easy for image-editing programs to differentiate between these tiny dots and legitimate image details, so removing noise can sometimes be a fragile task. However, Photoshop has a trick up its sleeve in the shape of its Reduce Noise filter. Found under the Filter menu, it will adjust the parts of the image where there is consistent colour, but will keep the edges and details in your photograph. This means that the areas which might otherwise be blighted by noise artefacts are smoothed out. But getting the best results requires a skilled touch, and we show you how to get started here. Although we've used Photoshop CS2 for this tutorial, those with older versions or Photoshop Elements can still follow the steps. There just might be a couple of options missing from your Reduce Noise filter.

WATCH THE NOISE

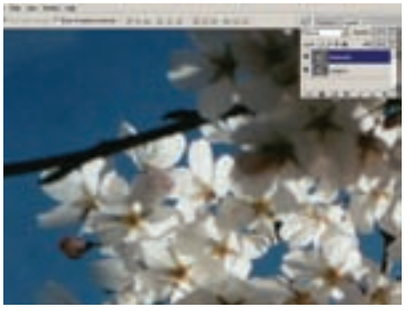
How to smooth out offending pixels

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

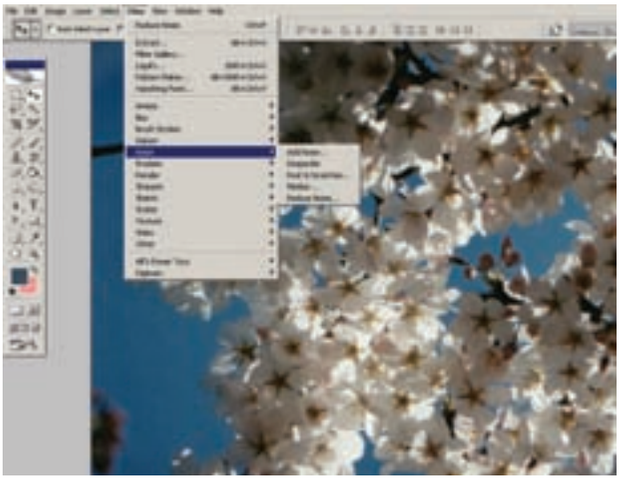
TIME TAKEN
Half an hour

YOUR EXPERT
Katty Houtmeyers

ON THE CD
Noisy image



01 Examine your image Copy the file for this tutorial from the CD to your desktop and open it up in Photoshop. Set about examining the problem areas. You'll notice that the blue sky behind the flowers has the most noise. Duplicate the layer and name the first one Original and the second one Retouch.

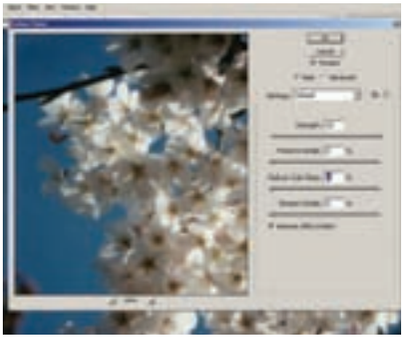


02 Reduce Noise In the Filter menu, go to Noise> Reduce Noise to bring up the dialog box. You'll see four different sliders to work with: Strength, Preserve Details, Reduce Colour Noise, Sharpen Details and a checkbox: Remove JPEG Artefact.

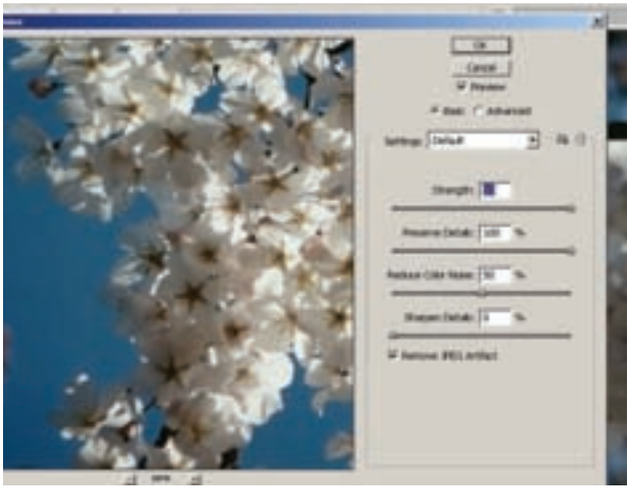
WORKS WITH | YOU CAN REDUCE NOISE IN PHOTOSHOP VERSION 7.0 AND ABOVE AND PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS VERSION 3.0 AND ABOVE

NOISE BEGONE!

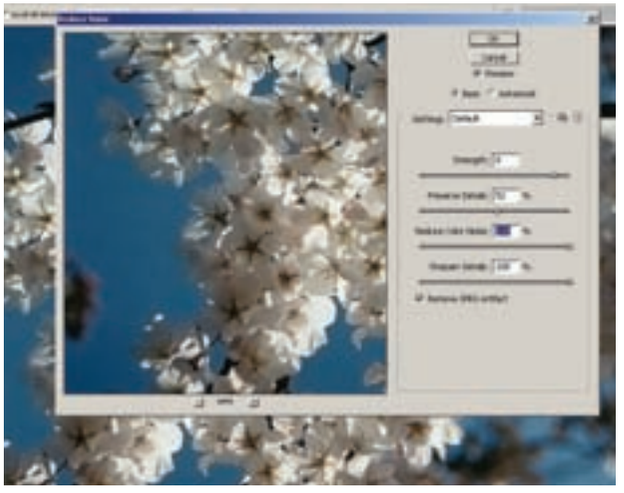
Picking the correct settings



03 **Strength in numbers** The Strength slider controls the amount of luminance noise reduction applied to all image channels. The higher the strength value, the more noise will be removed, but you'll also lose more detail. For this image set it to 10.

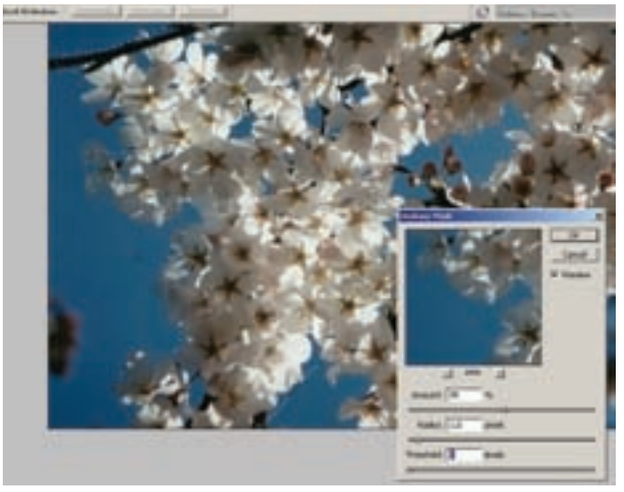


04 **Preserve details** While removing the noise you'll notice that the image details and edges become too soft. The Preserve Details can be adjusted again to bring back the detail in the flowers. Search for the optimum balance between Strength and Preserve Details. We plumped for a setting of 52 for Preserve Details in the end.



05 **Reduce Color Noise & Sharpen Details** You'll sometimes find random coloured pixels, especially green or pink. These can be fixed with the Reduce Color Noise option. You can also sharpen details with the last slider, but it's best to do this with other tools, so you can work with selected parts instead of the complete image. Check Remove Artefacts and click OK.

06 **Perfectionism** Most of the noise is fixed with this filter, but it's not perfect. We'll manipulate the sky and flowers separately. In the Select menu, pick out Color Range and select the blue sky. Set Fuzziness to 39 and add an extra feather of 10px. Bring up the Reduce Noise filter again and set Strength to 8, and Preserve Details to 0. If there are still disturbing pixels, remove these manually with the Healing tool.



07 **Sharpen things** Make a rough, feathered selection with the Lasso tool around the flowers at the font of the shot. These should be sharp, and by selecting them we can make adjustments without affecting the blue sky. In the Filter>Sharpen menu choose Unsharp Mask, set the amount to 95% and click OK.

08 **Save your work** Compare the two layers by unchecking the one on top. You should see that your edited version is a lot smoother than the original photo. If you can see any other parts of the image that need tidying, select the Patch tool, make sure Source is checked in the Options bar and draw around troublesome areas. Move the cursor to clean bits and see the noise disappear. Flatten the file and save.

Tool School

Keep an eye on progress

When working in filter dialog boxes, you check or uncheck the preview box to see what the changes will look like. However, this can sometimes take a bit of time especially if you are on a slower computer. A faster way is to click and hold inside the preview box with the mouse. This will return to the original image state, giving you a good idea of how it's going.

Tool School

The merits of noise

When you've worked on an image a lot, and especially when you used Gaussian blurs, the picture will look too smooth. Here we can use the opposite of reducing the noise: adding noise. It can make images look natural again, giving back a film grain as if it was shot with an analog camera. Experiment with the Monochromatic setting over the complete image for an arty look.

Create your own sea

It doesn't matter if you haven't got an underwater camera – you can create your own aqua world with Photoshop's tools

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
About one hour

YOUR EXPERT
Lora Sykes and Jo Cole

ON THE CD
Photos for your watery world

Nature programmes are a brilliant place to get inspiration for digital projects and the episodes that focus on underwater life are the most interesting. After all, here is a world that most of us never see properly. The colours, reflections and way the light behaves are very different to our land-based existence and as such, are excellent material for a creative project. But you might think that underwater images are out of your artistic range – it's not like everyone has access to an underwater camera. The truth is, with some deft Photoshop work you can whip up realistic scenes that would otherwise require all sorts of special equipment.

To prove exactly this, we have created the scene you see above completely in Photoshop. Well, kind of. The shark, fish and coral are all photos, but the ocean world they live in started life as a couple of gradients, some filters, a ropey old sand picture and a bit of blurring. By combining them all together and applying some well-chosen filters, we quickly built up a submerged scene.

Of course, this is only the start of what you can do. With your new-found knowledge you can add temples for a sunken kingdom kind of a feel, or maybe add some plants and merge it with the ocean feel and make it look like seaweed. You might add loads of fish or maybe turn someone you know into a mermaid.

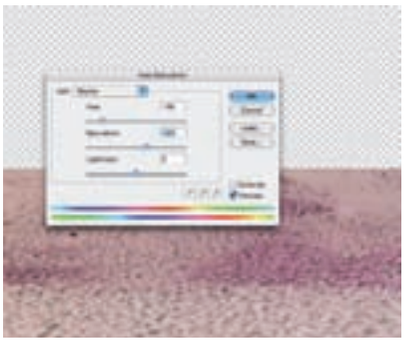
A quick note before we begin, though. If you use Photoshop Elements, have a look at the side bar on page 65. This tutorial was created in Photoshop CS2 and there are a couple of steps where you need to take an alternate route.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 3.0 AND ABOVE

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

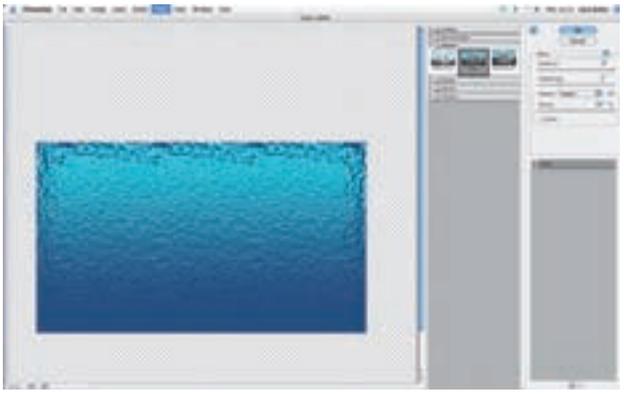
Take the first dip in the ocean

01 The bottom of the ocean Open Photoshop and copy the tutorial files to your desktop. Go to New and create an RGB canvas that's 17cm x 21cm at 300dpi. Open the 'Sand' file and use the Rectangular Marquee tool to select the square of sand. Copy and paste into the new document. It'll come in smaller, so go to Edit>Transform>Scale and move the handles until it fills the bottom half of the document. Elements users need to go to Image>Resize>Scale.



02 Water colours Go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation and move the Hue to -98 and Saturation to +21. This edits the colours to help give the underwater feel. Elements users need to go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Hue/Saturation.

03 The first sea Create a new layer. Click the Foreground square and change to a light aqua and click the Background to a royal blue. Use the Rectangular Marquee tool to make a selection in the middle of the screen and go to the Gradient tool. Click on the top middle of the selection and drag halfway down. Let go of the mouse to fill with colour.

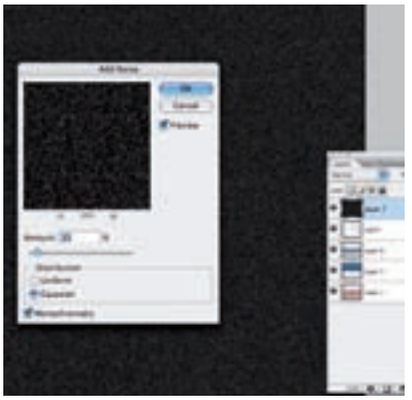


04 Ripple effect Go to Filter>Distort>Glass to open up the Filter Gallery. Slide Distortion to 20, Smoothness to 5, make sure Texture is Frosted and the Scaling is 200%. Click OK. This gives you the top part of the sea, with all the ripples. It's a long way from being finished yet, though.

05 A sense of perspective The sea needs to be scaled up. Go to Edit>Transform>Scale (Elements users do as before). In the top Options bar, click the chain icon and change the Height to 400%. The width will change automatically. Go to Edit>Transform>Distort (Image>Transform>Distort for PE). To give the sea some perspective, drag the two bottom handles to the middle edge of the canvas, and move the middle one to the middle of the canvas.

06 Merging mission At the moment the sea and the sand don't merge. Create a new layer, swap your foreground and background colours, click the Gradient tool and click Transparency on the Options bar. Click the Gradient bar in the Options bar to bring up the Gradient Editor. Select the gradient you've just made and click OK. Go to the Marquee tool, set Feather to 26px, and drag a selection from the bottom half of the sea to the bottom of the canvas. Select the Gradient tool and drag in the selection from top to bottom.

07 Ray of light Create a new layer and select the Polygonal Lasso tool. In the Options bar make the Feather 10px and draw some shapes for the light rays. These can go in whatever direction you fancy. Fill with white. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and move the slider to 100 pixels. Change the ray layer's opacity 30%.



08 Murky depths Even in the clearest oceans there is floating matter under the water, which we can re-create. Make a new layer, fill with black (Edit>Fill) go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise make sure the Gaussian and the Monochromatic are both ticked and make the Amount 33%. Duplicate this layer to be used later.

Credit where credit's due

We had some help with the photos for this tutorial and would like to thank the people who took them. Big thumbs up to Natasha Whiteley for the use of the shark photo, Patrick Caro for the coral and Tatyana Khramtsova for the fish. All photos were found on the excellent Stock.xchng site (**www.sxc.hu**).

Elements users

When you get to step 16, you need to do something a little different to the instructions we give. Because Photoshop Elements doesn't have a Paths option, you need to select the shark with either the Magic Wand tool or the Magnetic Lasso. Once you have the shark selected, copy and paste into the main document and carry on with the steps.

WHEN YOU'RE USING THE FILTERS, ALWAYS MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN RGB MODE. IF YOU'RE IN ANY OTHER TYPE OF MODE SOME OF THE FILTERS WON'T WORK | **ALERT**

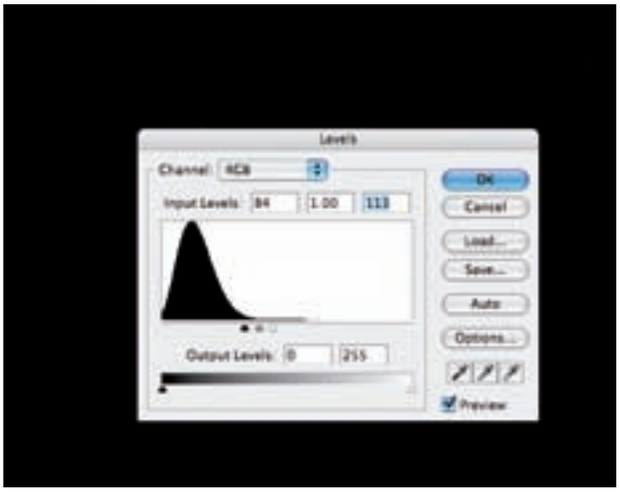
Expert Tip

Match up reflections

We really lucked out with the shark photo used in the tutorial – the reflections on its head matched perfectly with the general ripply feel. If you use a photo that doesn't have some ready-made ripples, all you have to do is select where you want the light reflections to be and then use the Crystallize filter as with the sea floor.

ON REFLECTION…

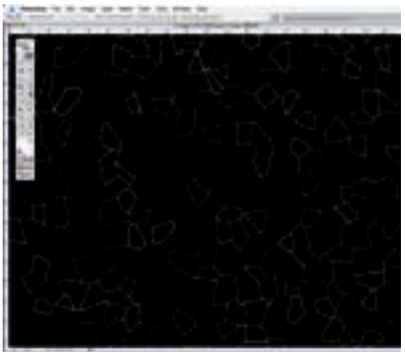
The key to watery lighting effects



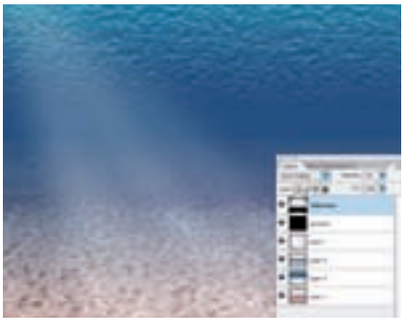
09 Bring the noise Hide the duplicate and return to the original layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Blur More. Go to Image> Adjustments>Levels (Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Levels for PE). Move the black arrow under the histogram from the right to the beginning of the hill and move the white arrow to the left until you see some noise. Click OK.

10 Edit the mode Go to the Normal drop-down menu in the Layers palette and scroll down to pick the Screen blending mode. Change the Opacity to 64%. Double-click on the layer's name and call it Particles so it doesn't get muddle up with the duplicate.

11 Crystal-clear Click on the duplicate noise layer and reactivate it (click the eye). Rename it to 'reflection'. Go to Filer>Pixelate >Crystallize and move the Cell Size to 138. Click OK. It doesn't look like much now, but this will create the ripply reflections on the sea floor.

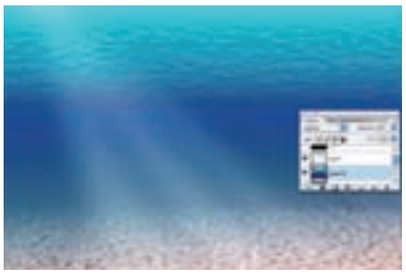


12 Opposites attract Go to Filter>Stylize>Find Edges. Go to Image>Adjustment>Invert (PE users need to go to Filter>Adjustments>Invert). This will turn the edges of the shapes to white.

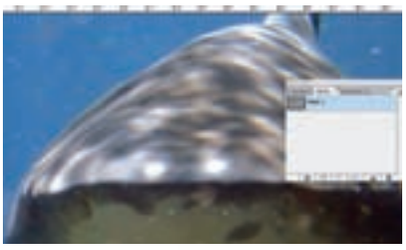


13 Get out of dodge Visit Filter>Distort>Ripple and set the Size to Medium and the Amount to 275%. Click OK and go to Filter>Gaussian Blur. Set the Radius to 7.5px. Click OK. Change the layer's blending mode to Color Dodge and the Opacity to 70%.

14 A touch of highlights Go to Edit>Transform>Distort (PE users do as before) and drag the top middle point down to where you want the reflections to stop (we chose about halfway on the sand). Take the left and right bottom points, drag down and out to get the correct perspective. The sand should look like it has highlights.



15 Tropicana drinks are free To boost the colours, make a new layer, position under the rays of light layer. Select aqua for the Foreground and rich blue for the Background. Select the Gradient tool and with Transparency unchecked, drag from top to halfway down. Change the blending mode to Lighten and adjust the Opacity to 26%.



16 Here comes Jaws… Open the shark.jpg from the tutorial files folder and go to Window>Paths. In the Paths palette, go to the right arrow and select New Path. Select your Pen tool and draw around the shark. Go to the right arrow in the Paths palette and pick Make Selection. Copy and paste back into your underwater document. If you're using Elements, turn to the side panel on page 65.

TIP | FEEL FREE TO EXPERIMENT WITH COLOURS, GRADIENTS AND RIPPLE PATTERNS TO GET YOUR OWN UNDERWATER WORLD

A SHARK'S TALE

Make the elements look like they belong

17 **Position your shark** Visit Edit>Transform>Scale and get the shark to the right size. With the shark still selected, go to Select>Modify>Contract and contract by 2 pixels. Hit OK. Go to Select>Inverse and Gaussian blur by a few pixels to soften the edges.

18 **The belly of the beast** DO NOT DESELECT! We need to make us a shadow. Create a new layer, go to Select>Transform Selection (PE users need to go to Image>Transform>Free Transform). Click and drag the top middle handle to the bottom of the canvas. This is to flip the selection. Let go and click Return. Go to Edit>Fill and pick black.

19 **Final shadow touches** Reduce the shadow layer's Opacity to 35% and go to Filter>Gaussian Blur. Move the slider to get the effect you want. Add a touch of noise to make it blend into the sand.

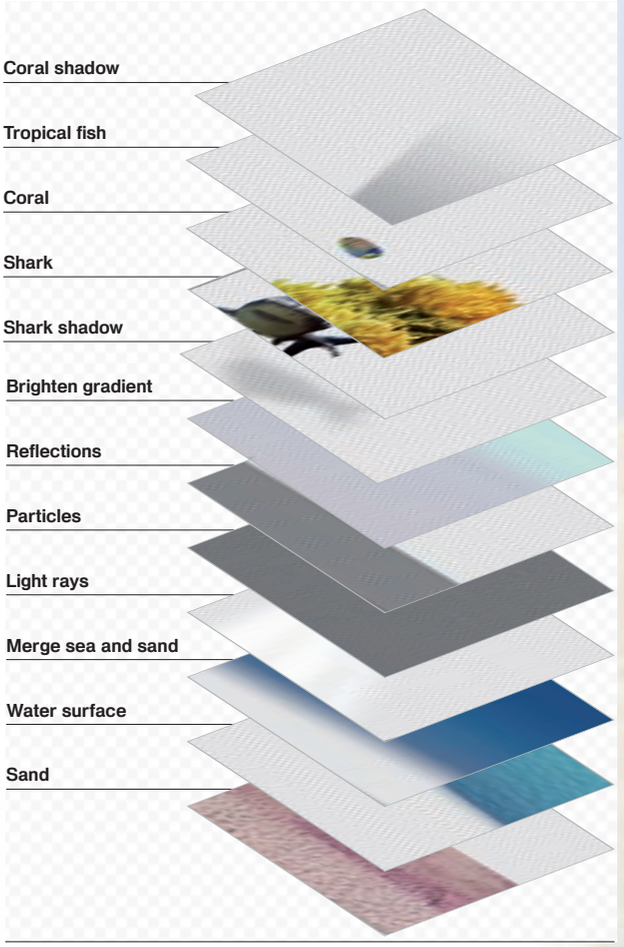
20 **The extras** Open the coral image, pick the Magic Wand tool and with a Tolerance of 95%, click the green background. Go to Select>Inverse to pick up the coral and copy and paste into your sea. Pick the Eraser tool to wipe out any stray selections. Open the fish and select with the shark. Copy and paste into the main document and scale to an appropriate size. Make sure he's on top of the coral.

21 **Blending in** At the moment the coral and fish aren't the right colour. Create a new layer, select the Polygonal Tool, set Feather to 8 pixels and draw a spotlight shape. With a Foreground of black and a Background of white, select the Gradient tool, make sure Transparency is clicked and pick a Foreground to Transparent gradient. Drag from the bottom-right diagonally up to the to point of the selection. Change the opacity to 64%, deselect, zoom out and position the shadow over the fish and coral.

22 **Your call** You're pretty much done now. Play about with the settings, maybe add another shark or more fish in the background as we have here. You could even try adding buildings or pictures of temples for that Atlantis feel.

The layer structure

Building up the ocean floor



LAYER EFFECTS

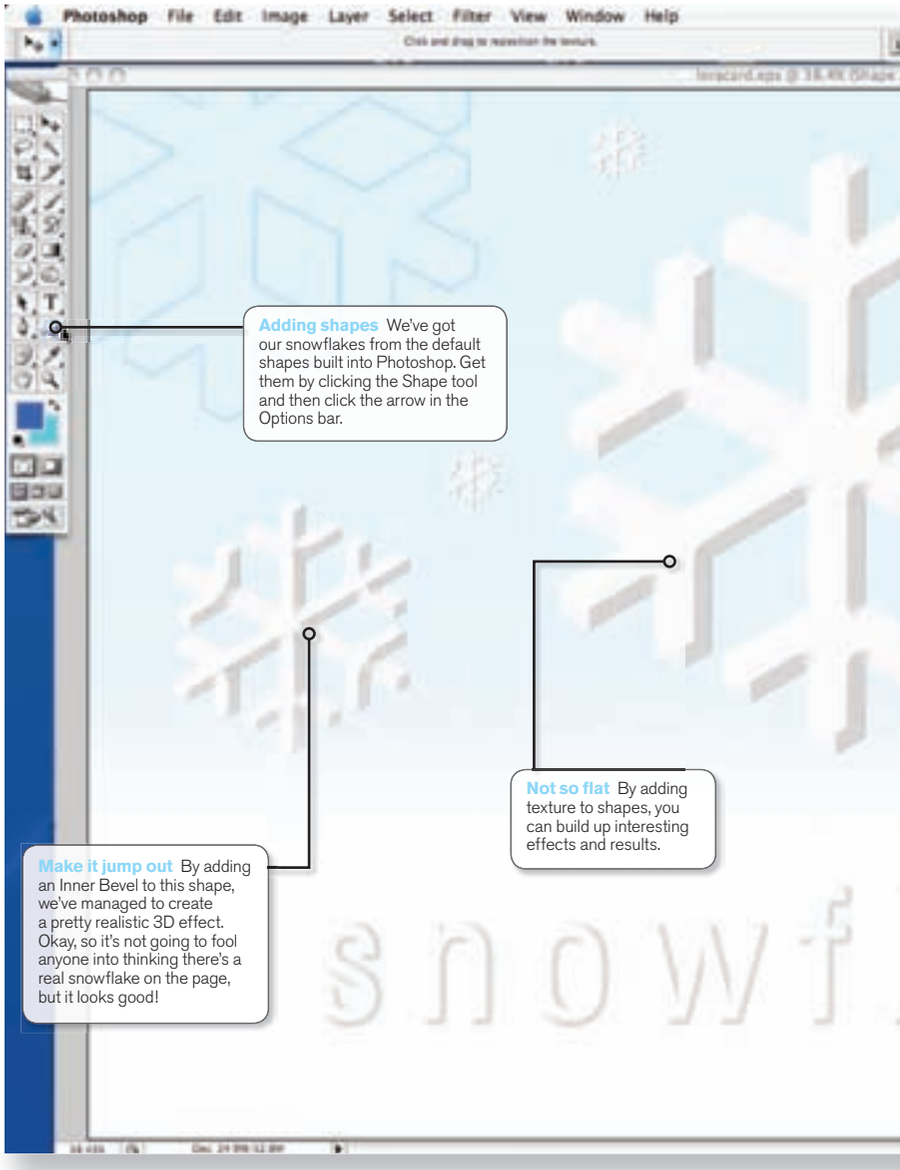
Bevel and Emboss

As we continue our tour around the Layer Styles neighbourhood, we drop in on the Bevel and Emboss command

Photoshop is a 2D program, so you are obviously working in a flat environment. Most of the time this is fine, but there may be occasions where you want an object or shape to stand out from the rest of the page furniture, or maybe you are working with text and want it to have a bit more 'zing' than the rest of the elements. In these occasions, it's worth paying a visit to the Bevel and Emboss Layer Style. These two help create a feeling of depth by adding highlight and shadow to layer shapes. Depending on where these highlights and shadows are placed, a 3D effect can be quickly generated.

The bevel effects make an object look as though it has been chiselled away, and is great for giving hard, sharp edges. The emboss options are a bit softer and make objects seem to rise out of the document or look as though they have been stamped into the page. In addition to deciding on a bevel or emboss, you also have control over the size of the effect, the direction of light and shadows and the shape of the edges. The option to apply a texture is also worth investigating and opens up even more options.

On these two pages, we're going to look at where all the different options for bevel and emboss live and what they can be used for. As with everything to do with Photoshop, the best way to learn is to experiment for yourself, but at least these pages will get you started!


Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Select Filter View Window Help
Adding shapes We've got our snowflakes from the default shapes built into Photoshop. Get them by clicking the Shape tool and then click the arrow in the Options bar.
Not so flat By adding texture to shapes, you can build up interesting effects and results.
Make it jump out By adding an Inner Bevel to this shape, we've managed to create a pretty realistic 3D effect. Okay, so it's not going to fool anyone into thinking there's a real snowflake on the page, but it looks good!

Pick the style

The bevel or the emboss?

With the Layer Style window open and the Bevel and Emboss checkbox checked, go to the Style drop-down menu in the middle section to pick whether you go for a bevel or an emboss. The Technique menu allows you to choose the type of chisel effect you fancy. We used Chisel Soft in our snowflake example.

Depth and Shadow

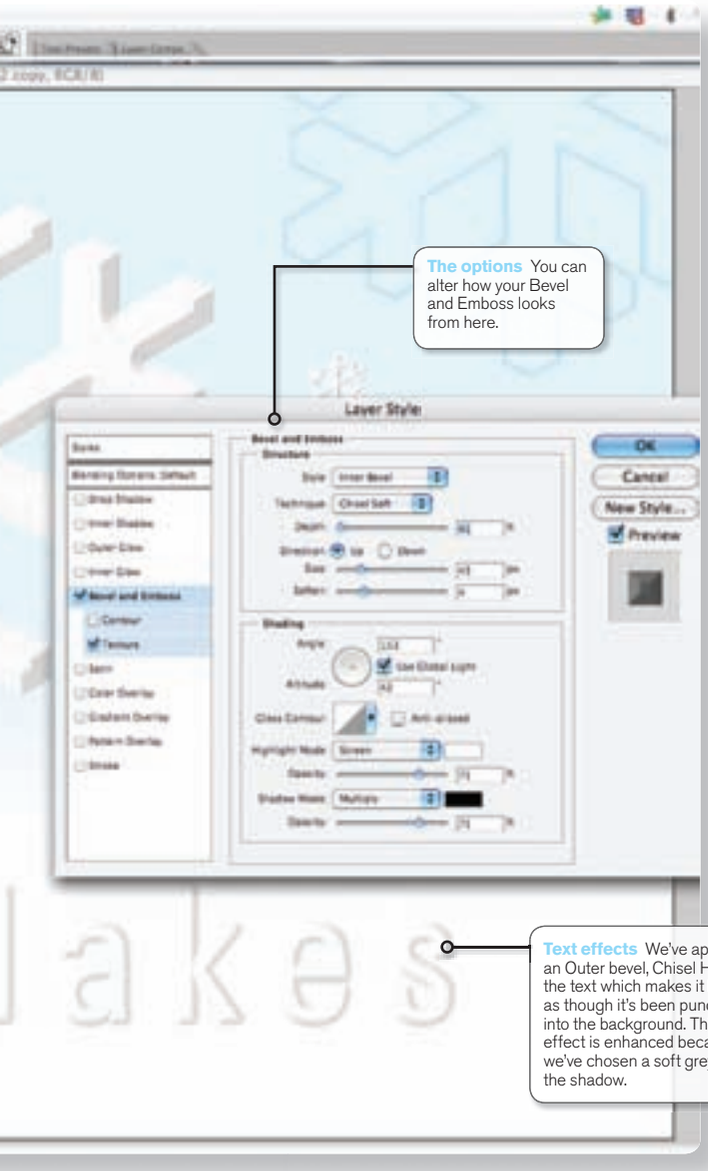
Alter the spread of the effect

Depth controls how much highlight and shadow are offset. The higher this is, the more the effect will spread out. The Up and Down buttons switch the highlights and shadows, while Size affects the size. The Soften slider tones down the shadows and highlights.

Tip

Not just shapes

You can apply Bevel and Emboss effects to text layers as well as shape layers. In fact, the effect is probably most successful with text, especially the emboss options.


The options You can alter how your Bevel and Emboss looks from here.
Layer Style
OK
Cancel
New Style...
Preview
Text effects We've applied an Outer bevel, Chisel Hard to the text which makes it look as though it's been punched into the background. This effect is enhanced because we've chosen a soft grey for the shadow.

Tip

Keep it all together

When you're applying a texture to a bevel or emboss, you can select the Link with Layer checkbox. This allows you to move the texture and layer in complete unison.

Add texture to your layer's shape

The Bevel and Emboss options do a pretty good job of accenting an object, but for even more impact, try adding a texture to the shape…

01 View the textures

To get to the textures, you need to click the Texture box at the left side of the dialog box and then click on the word Texture. Click the arrow to see all the different textures. You'll notice these are pattern files.

02 Alterations

You can adjust the scale of the texture or alter the Depth setting to adjust the contrast of shadows and highlights in the pattern. This is achieved by using the sliders.

03 Reposition

You can drag the texture about in the shape to alter the effect. If you click the Snap to Origin box, you can realign the pattern to the upper-left corner of the image. When you're happy, click OK.

The right angle

Sort the light source

The Angle and Altitude settings let you set the location of the light source. The light source affects the highlights and shadows of the effects and it's important to get it right. Unless you have a special Global Light setting, it's best to uncheck the Use Global Light box.

Contours

See to the edges

Click the Gloss Contour arrowhead to adjust contours. Contours affect the fade on a drop shadow or the highlight on a bevel and can influence how an effect looks. For example, you can take the cone contour and make the Bevel and Emboss look carved.

Tonal control

The highlights and shadows

The bottom part of the Bevel and Emboss window deals with editing the shadows and highlights. You can alter the mode of the shadow or highlight, which allows you to have the same control as if you were using layer blending modes. If you click on the colour swatch, you can also decide on a new colour for the highlight or shadow. We used a grey in our example here.

NEXT MONTH | WE SEE WHAT THE SATIN FILTER OFFERS

Cut out with Fluid Mask

Make sure your cutouts are neat and tidy by using the very handy Fluid Mask plug-in

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Jo Cole

Cutting out is one of those painful jobs that people always approach through gritted teeth. Sometimes you luck out and work with an image that has nice, clearly-defined lines, so a swift dose of the Magic Wand takes care of business in seconds. But for each time you get an easy cutout, there are dozens of occasions when an image just proves to be too much of a challenge and you give up and try something else.

Well instead of trying a different image, why not try a different way of cutting out? Fluid Mask is a plug-in that isolates subjects in a quick and logical way. It works in a similar way to Photoshop's own mask options, except it has its own interface and much more control. In addition to the familiar mask features, you can also zoom in on an area that's causing you grief and use the Region Editor to pinpoint the precise colours to delete or keep. All brushes have their own settings for extra control; whether it's making the brush area bigger or changing how it affects the mask it is being applied to. You can see how your mask is progressing by bringing the Test Render tool into play and then get busy making any tweaks that have to be done.

There are loads of methods when using this plug-in, and the method you go for depends on the type of image you have. In the example here, we're going to show how to make basic delete and keep masks, just to give you an idea of how it all works, and also show the Region Editor in practice. To see what else the plug-in can do, visit **www.vertustech.com**. If you like what you find, you can buy Fluid Mask for £179 or enter our Readers' Challenge to be in with a chance of winning a copy.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

CUT OUT AND KEEP

Using Fluid Mask to make the impossible possible

01 **What to keep** After installing Fluid Mask, pay a visit to Filter>Vertus>Fluid Mask. When the interface opens, sashay over to the left tool palette and click the third one down on the left. This is the Keep Global tool and will select the colours to, well, keep. We've drawn on the trunk to select pixels of the same hue.

02 **Quick results** All the green represents the masked areas that will be kept. This hasn't picked up all the trunk or branches, so zoom in (Apple and the '+' key for Mac or Ctrl and the '+' key for Windows) and pick a smaller brush in the Tool Options window. Also select the Auto-Smooth Selection box.

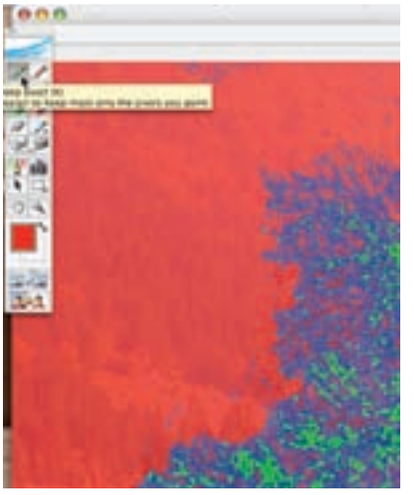
03 **Work around** With a suitably-sized brush, carry on selecting areas that you want to keep. When you're happy, zoom out. You'll probably notice that some areas have inadvertently been selected because they share the same colour values. Not to worry, you can pick the Eraser tool and rub them out!

Expert Tip

If you have an image with lots of gaps, such as our tree, the easiest way to get rid of the background is to use the Region Editor. This way you can quickly see the offending colour and get rid of it.

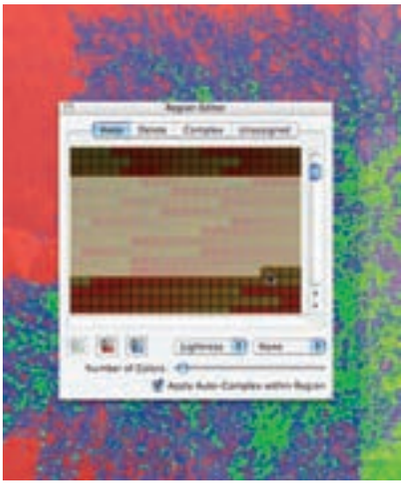
04 **Happy rubbings** Go to the fourth icon down on the left in the toolbar and click. Now swipe this over any offending items that have snuck into your selection. You can change the brush size of the eraser just as with a normal brush.

05 **Seeing red** When you're basically happy with the selection, go to Image>Auto-Fill Image. This will instantly bring in a red mask. Anything that's red will be deleted. If you see something in red that should be green, select the Eraser, rub out and pick the Keep Exact tool (top left). This masks only the pixels where you paint.



06 **Test it** To see how your image is progressing, you can do a test render. Pick the camera icon from the toolbar and then drag over where you want to check. In a second or two you'll see how it looks.

07 **Keep it regional** Things are going okay, but there are still a few snags. It's time to bring in the Region Editor. This allows you to target specific colours to keep or delete. Click the icon under the Test Render icon and drag over a region. You'll see this window. Click the Keep tab and select the reds and yellows of the tree. The selection will grow (which is represented by yellow).



08 **Complete and save** In just a few minutes we have isolated this tree, wispy branches and all. Now that the cutting out is complete, it's time to go to Image>Create Cut-out and if all is good, go to File>Save and Apply.

NOTES | WIN A COPY OF FLUID MASK BY ENTERING OUR READERS' CHALLENGE ON PAGE 98

Design a CD inlay

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
About one hour

YOUR EXPERT
Mark Smith

ON THE CD
CD templates

As well as using Photoshop to edit your digital photos, why not use it to create a CD inlay for an archive of digital photos?

Since the inception of the File Browser in Photoshop a couple of years ago, Photoshop has been a superb tool for managing your digital photos, especially as images can easily be labelled instead of adding up to nothing more than duplicate numbered lists in various folders. A vital part of the digital image process is making backups of your images to free up vital disk space. But don't just burn them to a faceless CD – allow your Photoshop skills to flourish and design a custom CD inlay.

A CD inlay will consist of three separate documents. The first is the cover. When creating a backup CD design, it's an idea to use an image on the CD on the cover. This is so you can quickly pinpoint what type of photos are on the disc. The cover must be clearly labelled with what images the CD contains; for example if it was a certain trip or holiday. You may even choose to theme your backups such as landscape photography. Having the date of the images will also be important in helping you retrieve the correct image. CDs usually contain a tray that wraps around the sides so we will design this and carefully label the sides of the jewel case. Also we will provide thumbnail images on the back so that it is easy to get access to the correct image later. The final part of the design will involve creating the CD onbody as most modern printers allow for CD printing. Use the same image for this as was used on the cover – quite often CDs get left in the computer only to be retrieved when another CD is inserted later. Using the same image on the CD will allow the image to be placed back in the correct jewel case.

You'll learn various skills over the course of this tutorial – from typographic control through to aligning objects on the page. We'll look at resizing images, positioning and merging layers together as well as the tricky task of typing text along a curve. We've provided the CD templates on the disc so you can follow along using your own photos. In a few steps you'll have a good-looking template for all your backups.

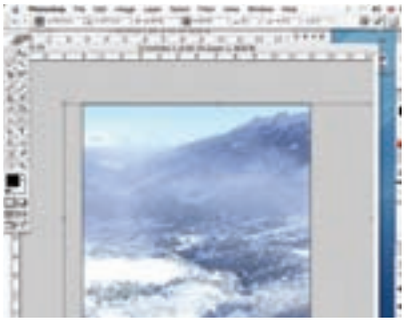
WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

DESIGN A CD COVER

Get the front sorted out

01 **Creating the cover** Open Photoshop and from the File menu choose New>Document. Set the document to 120mm x 120mm with white as the background colour and the pixels per inch set to 150. Press OK to create your new document.

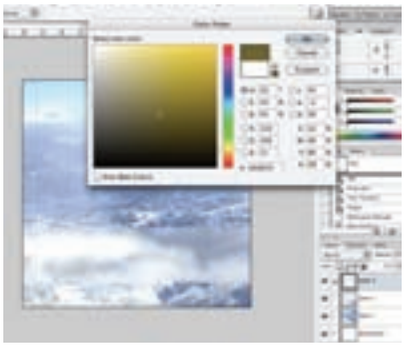
02 **Open the background** Pick the photo you'd like to use as the main image for the front of the CD inlay and open in Photoshop. Select the Move tool and drag the image into the new document created in the previous step. Now go to Edit>Transform>Scale.



03 **Resize the background** It will be difficult to see the corner handles to resize the image, so resize the image to 60% on both axis in the Options bar. Now you can see the corner handles so hold Shift and drag in to fine-tune the size. Double-click to apply when you are happy and then select the Rectangle Marquee tool.

04 **Copy a section** Drag the Rectangular Marquee tool across the bottom of the document and copy and paste to a new layer. From the Select menu choose Reselect. Now go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Drag the Radius slider until you have a value between 9 and 10 pixels, then press OK.

05 **A faded colour** In the Layers palette, click the New Layer icon. Pick the Paintbucket tool and choose white as the Foreground colour. Fill the marquee shape with white. In the Layers palette reduce the Opacity to 30% and you'll end up with the frosted look.



06 **Text colour** Press Ctrl+D (PC) or Apple+D (Mac) to deselect the marquee and switch to the Text tool. Click the colour square on the Options bar and select a colour for your text. We've gone for beige because it is a complementary colour for the blues in the photo.

07 **Add text** Now choose a suitable font; we're using Swiss. Make the font 60pt and type in a title. Open the Character palette and alter the space between letters using the third field down on the right. We selected the 'ill' of chill and set the space -25, and did the same for the 'i' in big.

08 **More text** Change the font size to 18pt and add another line of text if you wish. Save this file as 'cover.psd'. From the tutorial files, open 'cd-tray.psd'. Drag your main image below the 'cd-tray.ai' layer in the Layers palette. Resize the image as in step three so if fits.

Expert Tip

Spacing text

Changing the space between individual characters is known as kerning when it is the space between letters within a word. When it includes the space between words as well, it is known as tracking. These are common typographic tasks; when text size is increased any odd spaces between words is more noticeable. Most of the time this is just down to the fact that the designer wishes the letters to appear tighter than the original font designer had intended.

ABOUT.COM HAS LOADS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN ADVICE. VISIT **HTTP://GRAPHICDESIGN.ABOUT.COM/OD/DESIGNTIPS/A/CDCOVERDESIGN.HTM** FOR CD INLAY TIPS | **WEB**

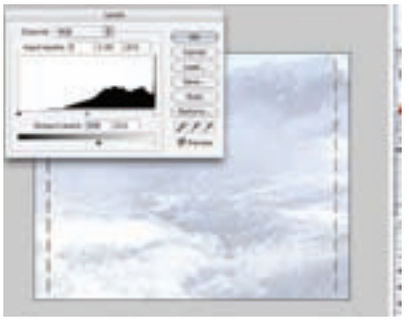
Tool School

Copying layers

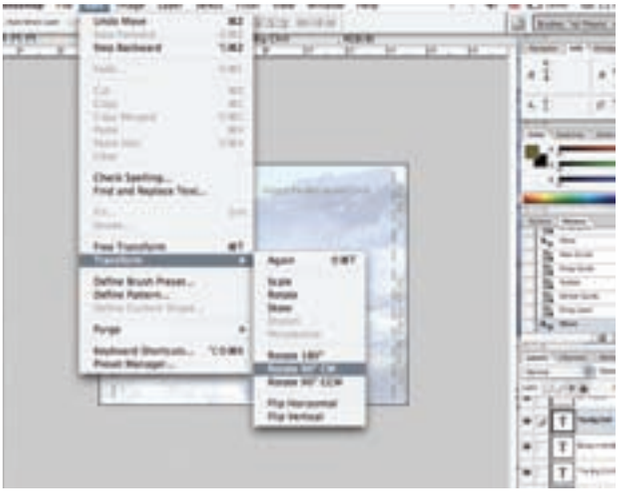
A common job within this tutorial is duplicating layers. This is all done within the Layers palette. Drag the layer that you wish to copy onto the New Layer icon at the bottom. This will create a new layer which will have the same name as the original layer but with the word 'copy' added to the end. Sometimes it is a good idea to take a copy of crucial layers when you are experimenting with your design ideas, so that you can go back to the original later.

MORE DETAIL

Adding thumbnails and colour correction



09 **Ghosting the image** We're going to fade this image so it doesn't dominate the design. Go to Image>Adjustments>Levels and drag the black output slider towards the white. A value of around 150 should do it so press OK. Now switch to the Text tool and pick the same text colour as you did for the front cover.



10 **Add a heading** Add the heading at 36pt text and the subheading at 18pt text. Duplicate the sub-heading text layer by dragging the layer to the New Layer icon. Add your text at the beginning and go to Edit>Transform>Rotate 90º CW. Position as shown to the left.

11 **Add a guide** Copy the last layer and from the Edit menu, choose Transform>Rotate 180º. Position on the other side of the document. If your rulers are not showing, go to View>Rulers. Click on the top ruler with the Move tool and drag downwards to add a guide. Place this fairly close to the bottom as shown.

12 **Resize the image** Open another image and drag into the document. Go to Edit>Transform>Scale. In the Options bar, resize the image to just 8% and then click OK. You will see the image reduce to a thumbnail; move it to sit on the guide at the bottom of the document.

13 **More thumbnails** Open another image and drag into the document. Go to Edit>Transform>Transform Again. This will automatically scale down the image to fit. Repeat with three more images so you have a line of thumbnails at the bottom.

Tool School

Print preview

When printing from Photoshop, choose the Print with Preview option. This allows you to see how your document will print on different paper sizes, such as 4 x 6 photo paper. This allows you to see if your document will print how you want it to and avoids throwing away loads of paper.

14 **Position end thumbnails** Select the end thumbnails and move them in an equal distance from the fold. Now add guides to the outside of these two images from the vertical ruler. In the Layers palette, select layer 2 and link with the other four thumbnail layers by clicking the square next to the Eye icon. Now go to Layer>Distribute Linked>Horizontal Centers.

15 **Merge the layers** Now you will see the thumbnails evenly spaced out along the document. As the images are linked we need to go to the Layers menu and choose Merge Linked. This flattens just these layers down to one layer. Using the Move tool, drag this layer to just under the heading at the top of the document as shown.

16 **Repeat the process** Repeat steps 13 to 15 for as many thumbnails as you want to include. This will of course take a few minutes to complete so be patient and follow the steps carefully – after a couple of times it will become second nature.

WEB | LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION FOR YOUR CD COVER? CHECK OUT **HTTP://WWW.GRAPHICALIC.DK/PAGES/DESIGN/PS.HTML**

17 Final positioning Remove the bottom guide by using the Move tool to drag it back up to the ruler. Move the bottom layer of thumbnails so there's enough space to add file names. Position the top layer of thumbnails as close to the heading as possible. Now link all of the thumbnail layers in the Layers palette.

18 Distribute vertically Go to the Layer menu and choose Distribute Linked>Vertical Centers. You will see the layers space evenly. Now go to Layer>Merge Linked to put all the thumbnails on one layer. Choose the Text tool, change the text colour to black and change the font size to 6pt. Add the file name under the first image.

19 Add more labels Duplicate the layer as before. Hold down Shift and nudge the duplicate text across by tapping the right arrow key. Use the Text tool to change the name of the text and repeat for the top row. Make sure the first and last piece of text are positioned in the right place.

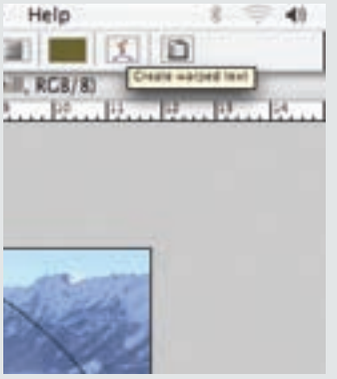
20 Distribute the text Link all the text label layers together and go to Layer>Distribute Layers>Horizontal Center. Once you've done that, go to Layer>Merged Linked. Repeat step 19 and 20 until you have labelled all the images in the same way. Link together all the text layers and the thumbnails layer.

21 Merge labels From the Layer menu, choose Merge Linked to merge the thumbnail images with the image labels. Turn the Eye icon off for the 'cd-tray.ai' layer; this turns the visibility of the guide layer off. Save the file and close. This now completes both the cover and the back of the CD box. Now for the CD onbody.

WARP FACTOR EIGHT

The joy of warped text

Expressive use of text is an invaluable part of any creative process. To enhance the CD onbody we have applied the use of text to a path. However, an alternative way of getting interesting text is to use the text warp. There are several preset warp shapes, although don't feel tied down to these because they are very easy to change. Whenever a prebuilt option is selected a pop-up window will allow you to change the settings with simple use of sliders. These sliders will enable you to create your own distinct-looking type styles. For example, it would be very easy to create type that looked like it was on cloth; a little like a flag blowing in the wind with ripples.



01 Create the text Click the Text tool and select a suitable font, size and colour. Type in your words. Now go to the top Options bar and click the Create Warped Text icon. It looks like a capital 'T' on a hill.

02 Add the warped Select the Style drop-down menu and try out a couple of options. When you have an idea of how they work, try experimenting with the Bend slider to see how that works. When you have a setting you like, you can move on to the Horizontal Distortion.

03 Horizontal and Vertical Horizontal Distortion allows one side of text to be made bigger than another. If you play with Vertical Distortion, set it to a negative number as this will fit in with shape of the CD better. As you can see from our example, this effect can be quite useful and would certainly suit a more aquatic image.

Tool School

Make contact

We have shown a detailed way of adding a series of thumbnail images. However, this can be done automatically in Photoshop. You may remember we covered the Contact Sheet option in issue one, but here's a quick reminder. Go to File>Automate> Contact Sheet II. Browse for your folder of images and set the number of rows and columns you want. You can even set the font size of the label of each image.

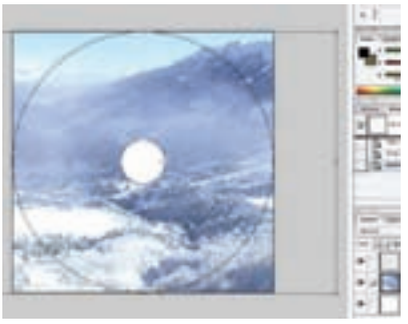
Tool School

Drop shadow

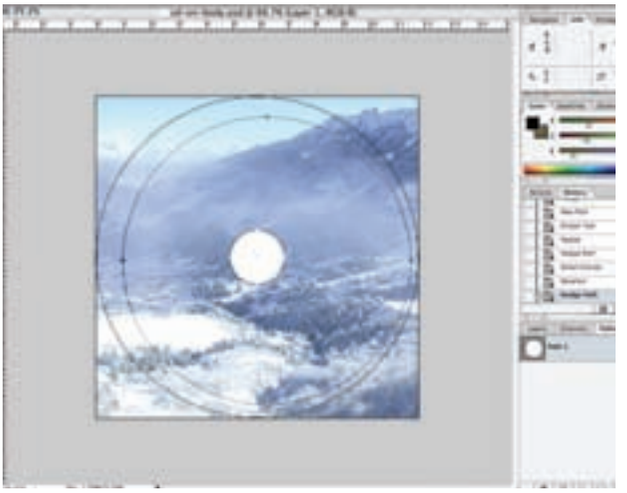
If you want to make your thumbnail images stand out that little bit more, open the CD tray document and in the Layers palette, double-click on layer 2. This will open the Layer Style pop-up window. From here you can now click on the Drop Shadow checkbox in the Category section. If you click on the words Drop Shadow, the options will appear to the right. Reduce the opacity of the drop shadow to about 50% as this looks far more natural, then click OK.

CREATE THE CD ONBODY

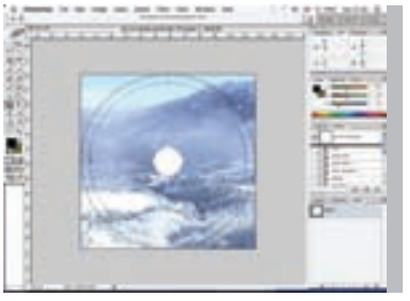
Finish up the CD creation



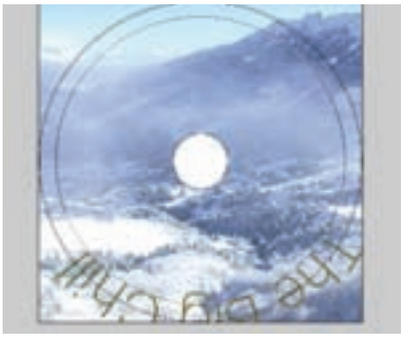
22 Open the files Open the 'cd-on-body.psd' file from the tutorial source files folder. Open your cover photo and use the Move tool to drag it over into the 'cd-on-body.psd' file. Drag the new layer below the 'cd-on-body.ai' layer and scale the image down as you have done previously for the CD cover and tray.



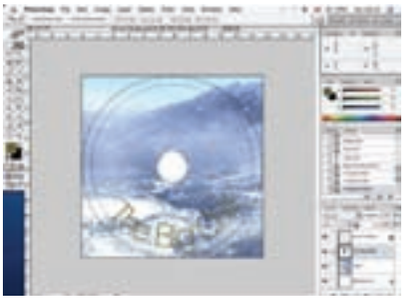
23 Create a path In the Layers palette, click on the Paths tab. At the bottom of the palette click the New Path icon. In the toolbar select the vector shape tool and hold it down until you can see the oval. Hold down Shift to constrain the oval to a circle and draw a circle as shown in the screenshot.



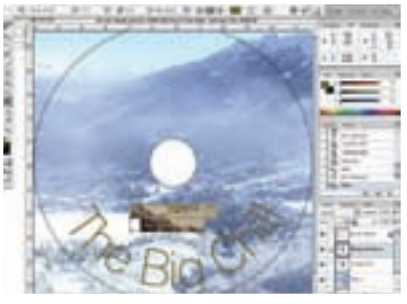
24 Position the path The chances are that you have been unable to draw the circle path centrally on the document. To move the path simply switch to the Direct Selection tool and drag around the entire circle. You can now pick up the circle and move it so that it is central on the document. When it's central, click off the circle to deselect it. This is the path for the text to go onto.



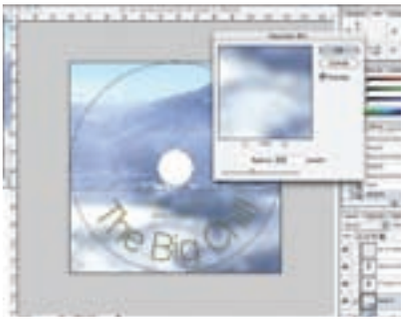
25 Text tool Click on the Text tool and change to the text colour used previously. Make the font size 60 and click on the circle. Type in the words and then change to the Direct Selection tool. Hold your mouse over the first letter of the text.



26 Move to the inside The cursor should have changed to an 'I' beam now with a small black arrow to the right. Click and drag the cursor from the first letter to the inside of the circle. This is now no longer in the right position so go to Edit>Transform Path and rotate. Rotate the path clockwise to bring the text back to the centre.



27 Change the tracking Click on the Character palette icon on the Options bar for the Text tool. Highlight the text and increase the space between characters to 25. You may need to rotate the text again to align it centrally. Add the subheading as a new text layer. Centre the text and make the text size 14pts. Now switch to the Rectangular Marquee tool.



28 Copy part of the layer Select layer 1 and use the Rectangular Marquee to select the lower part of the picture around the text. Copy and paste to a new layer. From the Select menu, choose Reselect and then go to the Filter menu and choose Blur>Gaussian Blur. Copy the settings as shown and click OK.

29 A new layer Add a new layer and select the Paint Bucket. Select white as the foreground colour and fill the selection. Change the Opacity to 30% and deselect the marquee. Save this file now and you will have completed all three pieces of artwork to create your custom CD cover for your images.

eMag™

Advice

Visit the advice centre for help in fixing photos, solutions to your imaging-editing problems and directions to helpful destinations on the Web

Your expert panel…

GEORGE CAIRNS
A Photoshop user for many years, George can tackle any problem

LORA SYKES
When it comes to design quandaries, Lora can make miracles happen

JO COLE
The net is awash with helpful sites, and Jo brings you the best ones out there

What you'll find in this section

Q+A
Get to the bottom of your image-editing woes in this part

PHOTO FIX
Send us your problem shots for advice on making them all better

RESOURCES
We guide you to the best websites for tutorials and instruction in using the Photoshop software

Send your questions to…

Post your questions to *Photoshop Creative* Q&A, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EQ.

Alternatively you can email us at **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**.

Q+A

Let us sort out your image-editing quandaries

Colour casts

Q I use my digital camera to create source material for my creative work. I've tried to improve the quality of my images' colours by setting the White Balance manually instead of relying on Auto. On the whole, this tends to give faithful colour reproduction but occasionally I end up with annoying colour tints. Can you tell me the best way to fix these colour problems in Photoshop?
Dave Parker

A Photoshop has several tools and menus designed to restore a picture's colours back to normal. Before we leap into looking at those tools, it's worth examining why digital cameras sometimes add colour tints (or casts) to our shots. Light has a colour temperature. Our sophisticated human eyeballs can give us an accurate perception of colour both indoors and out in a variety of lighting conditions. Digital cameras are not so sophisticated and can come unstuck when trying to capture accurate colours due to the different colour temperatures they encounter. To a camera daylight is blue and indoor light is yellow. The camera tries to balance the colours by using the AWB (Auto White Balance) setting. This setting looks at white objects in the scene and tries to alter the colour of these objects to create a balanced colour range. In daylight the whites look cool and blue, so the AWB setting attempts to warm them up. Indoors, the white objects tend to look warm and yellow. The AWB setting will try and cool them down to remove the yellow colour cast. Most of the time the camera's Auto White Balance setting will do a decent job of balancing colour. Cheaper cameras are more likely to get confused and add colour casts.

You can help matters by telling your camera whether it's shooting indoors or out. By setting its White Balance (WB) to 'daylight' the camera will know that it needs to warm things up. However, by setting the camera to a daylight White Balance you're likely to forget that you have it selected and shoot indoors using the outdoors WB setting. This adds an orange colour cast. Shooting outdoors using an indoors WB setting will give you blue tinted shots as the camera cools down light that already has a blue colour temperature.

Photoshop CS, CS2 and Elements 3 are all geared to deal with colour-related problems. The first place to start when faced with colour casts is CS and CS2's Photo Filter menu. This is designed specifically to deal with unwanted colour casts caused by White Balance problems. We shot the image illustrating this question on an indoor WB setting. This added a blue tint to the shot, which you can see in the left half of the photo. The right half of the photo has been colour corrected. We went to Image>Adjustments>Photo Filter and chose Warming Filter (LBA). We set a value of 35%, which was enough to remove the blue.

Photoshop Elements is so geared up to deal with the needs of digital photographers that it has a unique colour correction tool. Go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Remove Color Cast. You can then use an Eyedropper to tell Photoshop

Tip

When choosing brushes from the Brushes palette, just hover your cursor over the brush to see a preview. Normally you'd only see this if you clicked on the brush. If you don't see anything, you need to make sure that Tool Tips is selected in the General Preferences.

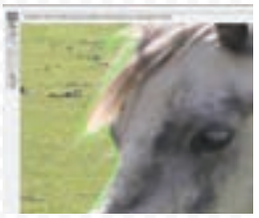
Take it easy

Learn by trying

It's easy to get blown away by the amount of choice Photoshop's tools give you, as some have many editable attributes. When coming to grips with attributes like brush presets for example, change one attribute at a time to see how that affects the tool's behaviour. This will help you understand what each editable attribute does.

Extract filter

Smart move



When using the Extract filter's Highlighter tool (see the 'Lovely Lasso' question) with the Smart Highlighting option turned on, you can press Control (PC) or Apple (Mac) to jump briefly to normal highlighting. Holding down the Alt key (PC) or Option key (Mac) enables you to access the Eraser tool so you can remove any mistakes when highlighting your subject's outline. This gives you even more control.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Altering text leading

	PC	Mac
Increase by 2pts	Alt+down arrow	Option+down arrow
Increase by 10pts	Ctrl+Alt+down arrow	Cmd +Option+down arrow
Decrease by 2pts	Alt+up arrow	Option+up arrow
Decrease by 10pts	Ctrl+Alt+up arrow	Cmd+Option+up arrow

Cool for cats? Photoshop's Photo Filter is designed to remove colour casts caused by incorrect white balance settings on your digital camera

Elements which part of the image should be white. The software looks at the sampled 'white' pixels. If they are blue it will warm the whole picture up, and if they are yellow Elements will cool the image's colours down.

Lovely lassos

Q I've been trying to capture a portrait of my pet dog. When I get a decent shot of him looking at the camera the background is cluttered and unattractive. I want to cut him out and place him in a more photogenic environment. I really like the Magnetic Lasso tool, though it's hard to make a selection that includes the dog's fur. Any tips? I am running CS2.
Victoria Gibson

A The more you use Photoshop the more you'll discover that particular tools are good for specific jobs. The

Changing lassos

While selecting an object with the Magnetic Lasso, temporarily turn it into a Polygonal Lasso by pressing the Alt (PC) or Option (Mac) key. This is useful when you want to quickly select areas at the edge of the screen without breaking your workflow.

Cycle through the tools

Photoshop crams similar tools into one compartment in the toolbox. Each tool has to share the same keyboard shortcut. For example the Dodge, Burn and Sponge tool all share the 'O' key shortcut. Hold down Shift then the appropriate key to cycle through all the similar tool options in a compartment.

CREATE COMIC BOOK ART

Q I'm not familiar with Illustrator but I'd really like to convert photos into comic book style illustrations. How can I do this using Photoshop CS?
Asghar Morjaria

A Thanks to Photoshop's powerful toolset you can create comic book style artwork from scratch without the need to pop into Illustrator. In this walkthrough we'll demonstrate how to use the Filters menu to create the distinctive coloured dots that traditional comic book printing processes utilise in large areas of colour. We'll also use some layer blending techniques to add washes of colour to the final image.

01 Be bold
Choose a dramatic dynamic source image. Duplicate the background layer. Select the copy and go to Image>Adjustments >Threshold. Setting our Threshold value to 65 gave us the type of bold and striking line art you'd get using Illustrator CS2's Live Trace menu.

02 Completely dotty
Select the Threshold layer and go to Filter>Sketch>Halftone Pattern. Set the Pattern Type to Dot, Contrast to 13 and Size to 5. Click OK. Set the Halftone Pattern's layer blending mode to Overlay.

03 Create a colour wash
Duplicate the coloured background layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Apply a blur of 8 pixels to simplify the details on the coloured layer. This adds a simplified wash of colours to the image. Experiment with these techniques to add more layers, texture and colour.

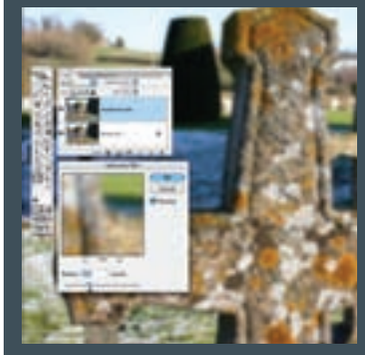
KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Arrange layers

	PC	Mac
Bring to front	Ctrl+Shift+]	Cmd+Shift+]
Bring forward	Ctrl+]	Cmd+]
Send to back	Ctrl+Shift+[	Cmd+Shift+[
Send backward	Ctrl+[	Cmd+[

FAKING DEPTH OF FIELD EFFECTS

Q I'm not too confident on using my camera's aperture settings to create shots with a shallow depth of field. How can I fake different focal points in an image using Photoshop? Is it even possible?
Patricia Wilson

A If your camera is set to a wide aperture you'll get a shallow depth of field; if it's set to a tight aperture you'll get a wide depth of field with more objects in focus. It's a great way of choosing what the viewer should focus on.



01 Duplicate and then blur

Start off with a shot that has everything in focus. Ideally it will have objects in the foreground and background. Duplicate the Background layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and blur the duplicated layer.

02 Magnetic lasso

Hide the blurred 'soft focus' layer for the moment. Target the original layer. Select the Magnetic Lasso tool. Set it to a Feather of 3 pixels. Use the lasso to select the object in the foreground.

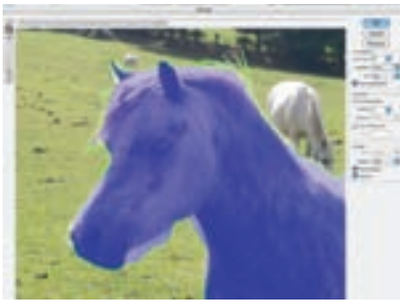
03 Add layer mask

Turn on the hidden blurred layer, select it and add a layer mask to it. This will use the lasso selection to punch a hole in the foreground layer. You'll now see the blurred foreground object against a sharp background.

Magnetic Lasso is great for quickly selecting objects against a contrasting background, but it's not so hot when it comes to dealing with finer details like fur. Use the Extract Filter instead. This powerful tool is geared up to selecting objects that have hair or fur around their edges. Go to Filter>Extract. Press 'B' to select the Highlighter tool (or click on its icon in the Extract filter's toolbar. Use this brush-based tool to draw around the edge of the animal (or person) you want to isolate. You can increase the brush size using the Tool Options section of the menu, or use the left and right square bracket keys to increase brush size interactively via the keyboard.

Alternatively turn on the Smart Highlighting option. This causes the brush size to increase or decrease automatically as you draw round the edge of your furry subject. The Smart Highlighting option also makes the Highlighter tool behave like the Magnetic Lasso, causing it to stick to the edge of your subject as you draw around it. Make sure that all the hairs are selected as you draw and you'll soon end up with a green line outline around your pet. Once you've draw round your subject, select the Fill tool and click once inside the green outline. This will fill the selection with a purple colour, telling Photoshop which part of the image you want to keep.

To see how your selection is shaping up, hit Preview. The filter will go to work and show you the selected object against a transparent background. It's unlikely that the Highlighter tool will have made a perfect selection first time round, so reach for the Cleanup tool. This makes the mask around the subject transparent, so it's handy to remove parts of the unwanted background that remain visible. It works in a similar way to painting a black brush on a layer mask. You can change the pressure of the Cleanup tool by using the number keys. Hold down the Alt key (PC) or Option key (Mac) to make the Cleanup tool restore missing pixels. Another handy tool is the Edge Touchup tool. This is especially useful when restoring detail to wispy areas of hair and fur that have been masked. Once you've tidied up your mask press OK and the tool will remove the unwanted background.



Use the Extract filter to make sure you don't harm a single hair on your subject's head when making a selection.

In synch?

Q I've just bought the whole Creative Suite and although I haven't had it very long I can tell that I'm going to be jumping between all the applications.

Blending modes

Experiment with blending modes by cycling through them. A quick way of doing this on a PC is to click on the blending mode icon in the Layers palette and use the Up and Down arrow keys to change them. Mac users need to hold down Shift and press the + or – keys.

Help yourself

It's there for you…

If you hit a creative or technical brick wall, ask for help. Each version of Photoshop has a comprehensive HTML database. Go to Help>Photoshop Help. Type in keywords to find assistance with your problem. There's even a link to tips in Adobe's Resource Center.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Reopen dialog box

	PC	Mac
Levels with last setting	Ctrl+Alt+L	Cmd+Option+L
Curves with last setting	Ctrl+Alt+M	Cmd+Option+M
Color Balance with last setting	Ctrl+Alt+B	Cmd+Option+B
Hue/Saturation with last setting	Ctrl+Alt+U	Cmd+Option+U

How can I make sure that my colour profiles are the same in each application?
Max Carstairs

A CS2 has been carefully designed to make all of the separate applications work together seamlessly. However it's not unusual for people to assign different colour profiles to different applications (or you may be using a shared machine in an office, making it hard to tell which application has been assigned to a particular profile). You can see which colour profile Photoshop is using by going to Edit>Color Settings. The Settings pull-down menu will give you a list of colour profile options, like Europe General Purpose 2 (which is a profile suitable for general print and screen work in Europe).

To find out if your CS applications share the same colour profile, open Adobe Bridge. Bridge is well named as it enables you to link Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign together. You can use it to force all the Creative Suite applications to share the same colour profile, making colour handling consistent in each package. In Bridge go to Edit>Creative Suite Color Settings. The icon at the top of the Suite Color Settings dialog box will tell you if the applications in the Creative Suite are synchronised for consistent colour. If they are not, choose a suitable profile from the list of options and click Apply. The icon will change, indicating that Creative Suite is now synchronised and will handle colours consistently in each application. Just make sure that Photoshop's Color Settings dialog box

Synchronise all of your Creative Suite applications' colour profiles in an instant using Adobe Bridge's Creative Suite Color Settings dialog box

is closed before attempting to use Bridge to synch the colour profiles.

Helpful histograms?

Q Are histograms actually of any use? How can I use them to improve any of my images?
Joe Murphy

A Histograms are fantastic tools. They are as useful to image editors as x-rays are to doctors. A histogram gives you a visual diagnosis as to the 'health' of your picture by illustrating if your picture has a full tonal range. True blacks have a value of 0 and true whites have a value of 255. You can see if an image is over or under-exposed by looking at the way pixels are distributed

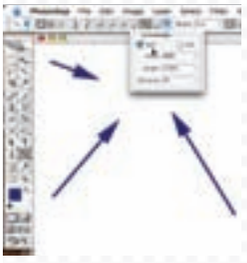
Histograms are a quick way of seeing where the problem with your images lie

across the histogram's length. Get into the habit of having the Histogram window open when you view images in Photoshop (Window>Histogram). A healthy image should have a histogram with pixels that run all the way along. The far left of the histogram shows pixels that are in the shadows. The middle of the histogram indicates the midtone pixels. The right of the histogram indicates pixels in the image's highlight range. Our example image was very under-exposed, so the initial histogram displayed more information for the shadows and midtones. There was hardly any information for the highlights. We fixed the image by going to Image>Adjustments>Levels. By dragging the white Level Input slider to the left (to 169) we re-mapped the image's lighter pixels to an Output value of 255. This brightened up the image, adding detail to the highlights without washing out the black levels.

Online Resources

If it feels like your Photoshop is working against you, visit the Photoshop Support site at **www.photoshopsupport.com/faq.html** for answers to queries.

To the point
Create arrowheads

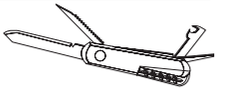


You might think that Photoshop can't create arrowheads on the end of lines, but you're wrong. It bloody can! Go to the Shape tools in the toolbar and pick the Line tool. In the Options bar, click the down-facing arrow and you'll see a dialog where you can click a checkbox to add the elusive arrowheads to your lines. You can even set how big they should be.

Back in time
Unerase edits

It's possible to use the History brush as a way of undoing an edit and reverting back to how an image looked before you started editing. You can do the same with the Eraser tool. Click on it and then look at the top Options bar. Check the box marked Erase to History. Instead of erasing to the background colour, the Eraser will now erase back to the original state of the image.

Curve tip
Don't guess colours



Curves are excellent for controlling the colours of an image, but how do you know where a precise colour 'lives' on the curve? It's easy – open up the Curves dialog and then Command-click (Mac) or Control-click (PC) on the colour in your image. Photoshop will then add a point on the curve which represents the colour you've just clicked on.

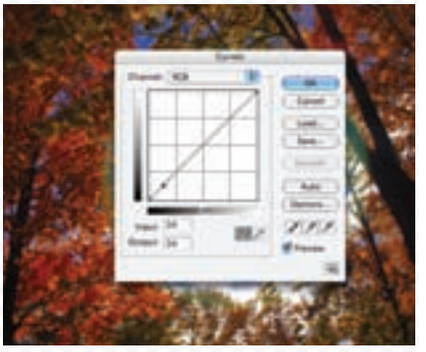


PHOTO FIX

Send in your troublesome images for us to fix…

Send your troublesome images on a CD to:

Photo Fix, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EQ

Unfortunately we cannot return CDs

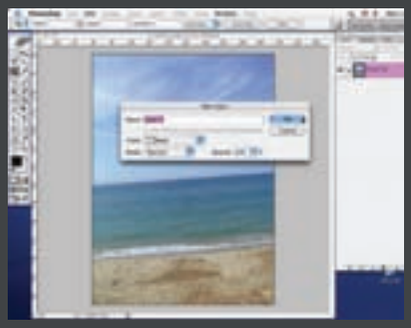
Crop and straighten photos

Don't put up with wonky horizons – crop and straighten your slanted photos in Photoshop

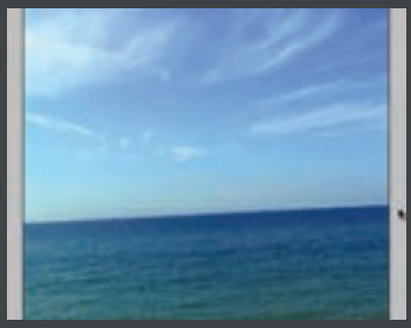
Even if you never venture out of the Auto mode on your camera, there are still loads of factors to consider if you want to take a perfect photo. You have to watch out for stray items wandering into your frame; you have to make sure you're holding the camera steady; and you have to make sure you're holding the camera straight. This last one is particularly easy to forget. Unless you are the human equivalent of a spirit level, you probably don't hold your camera straight-on. Whether this is because you naturally stand with your weight on one side, or you hold your arm lower on one side, it may not be noticeable until you go to take a picture of a supposedly straight horizon and end up with more of a slalom effect. However, with Photoshop on your side, you can easily straighten your photos and then crop away any extraneous leftovers.

STRAIGHTEN OUT YOUR AFFAIRS

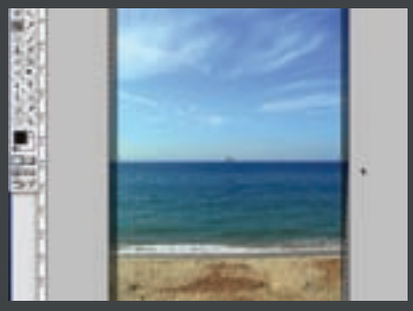
Use the Rotate tool to get things in line



01 Rotate and straighten Open up your wonky photo and increase the size of the document window by dragging the bottom-right corner out. You need to do this so there's a bit of space around the edges. Double-click on the photo in the Layers palette to turn it from a Background into an editable layer.



02 Point of reference Go to View>Rulers and then drag down from the top ruler. This gives you a straight reference line. Now go to Edit>Transform>Rotate (Image>Rotate for PE users) and use the curved double-ended arrow to rotate the photo. Use the straight line as a reference.



03 Crop away Once you're happy with the rotation, hit Return. You'll notice that there are empty areas where the photo has moved. To get rid of these, go to the Crop tool and make sure the Width, Height and Resolution fields are clear in the Options bar. Now drag the Crop tool over the photo to cut all the extra details away.

Tool School

Automated straighten

If you want to let Photoshop crop and straighten, open up your photo and go to File>Automate>Crop and Straighten Photos (Elements users go to Image>Rotate>Straighten and Crop). This is actually supposed to be used for straightening scans, so results with photos can be a little bit hit and miss.

RESOURCES

Excellent tutorial sites to increase your quest for image-editing nirvana

ENTHEOS

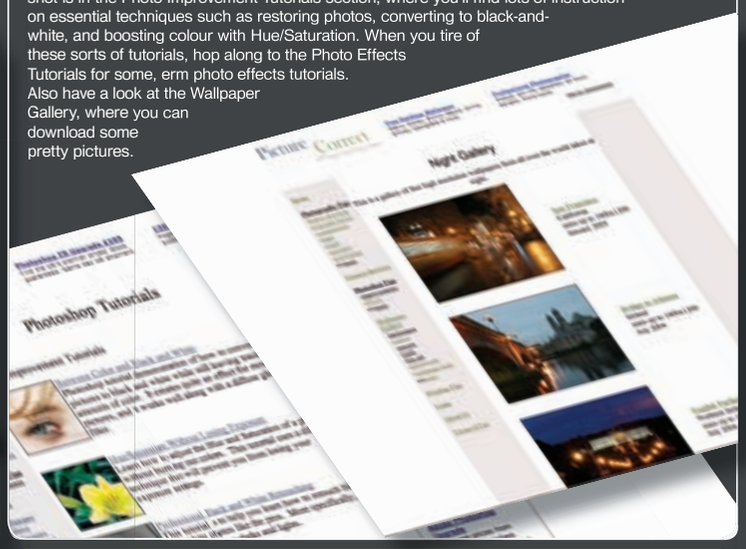
www.entheosweb.com/photoshop/default.asp

Although the main purpose of this site is to tout the services of the Entheos Web design company, a careful look in one of the side panels reveals untold riches. These riches take the form of free tutorials for the Photoshop software. Although the tutorials use Photoshop CS, those with older versions of the software or even those who use Photoshop Elements will still find plenty to amuse. There's a good selection of tutorials here, from those obviously tilted towards web design (Web Banner with Logo tutorial) to more creative ones that deal with effects (Icy Image). Some of the tutorials are very basic, but there's a good selection of topics and there's bound to be something to stoke the imagination fires.

PICTURE CORRECT

www.picturecorrect.com/PhotoshopTips.htm

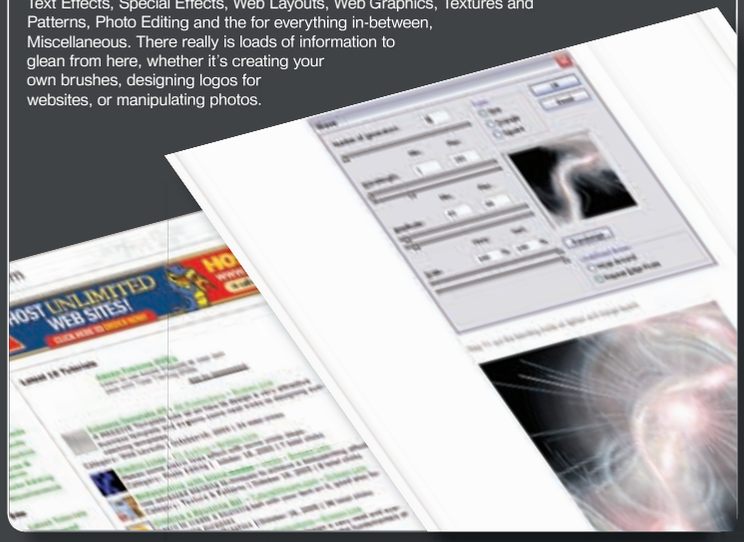
Do not fear if your digital photographs are looking decidedly glum; you can quickly turn their frown upside down by a swift visit to this site. You'll find a nice selection of tutorials for fixing common photo problems here, or maybe just for injecting a little bit of excitement to existing images. There are some nice general tips on taking better photos, but the money shot is in the Photo Improvement Tutorials section, where you'll find lots of instruction on essential techniques such as restoring photos, converting to black-and-white, and boosting colour with Hue/Saturation. When you tire of these sorts of tutorials, hop along to the Photo Effects Tutorials for some, erm photo effects tutorials. Also have a look at the Wallpaper Gallery, where you can download some pretty pictures.



CAPITAL TUTORIALS.COM

www.capitaltutorials.com

More lovely Photoshop tutorials to sink your teeth into. Capital Tutorials.com actually acts as a big mothership to lots of other tutorial sites. Instead of having to sift through all of these individually, though, you can just come to this site and browse the tutorials by category. Then when you see something you like, you will be whisked off to the host site. So what kind of tutorials can you hope to find here? Well you get to choose from Text Effects, Special Effects, Web Layouts, Web Graphics, Textures and Patterns, Photo Editing and the for everything in-between, Miscellaneous. There really is loads of information to glean from here, whether it's creating your own brushes, designing logos for websites, or manipulating photos.



FOTOFECTS

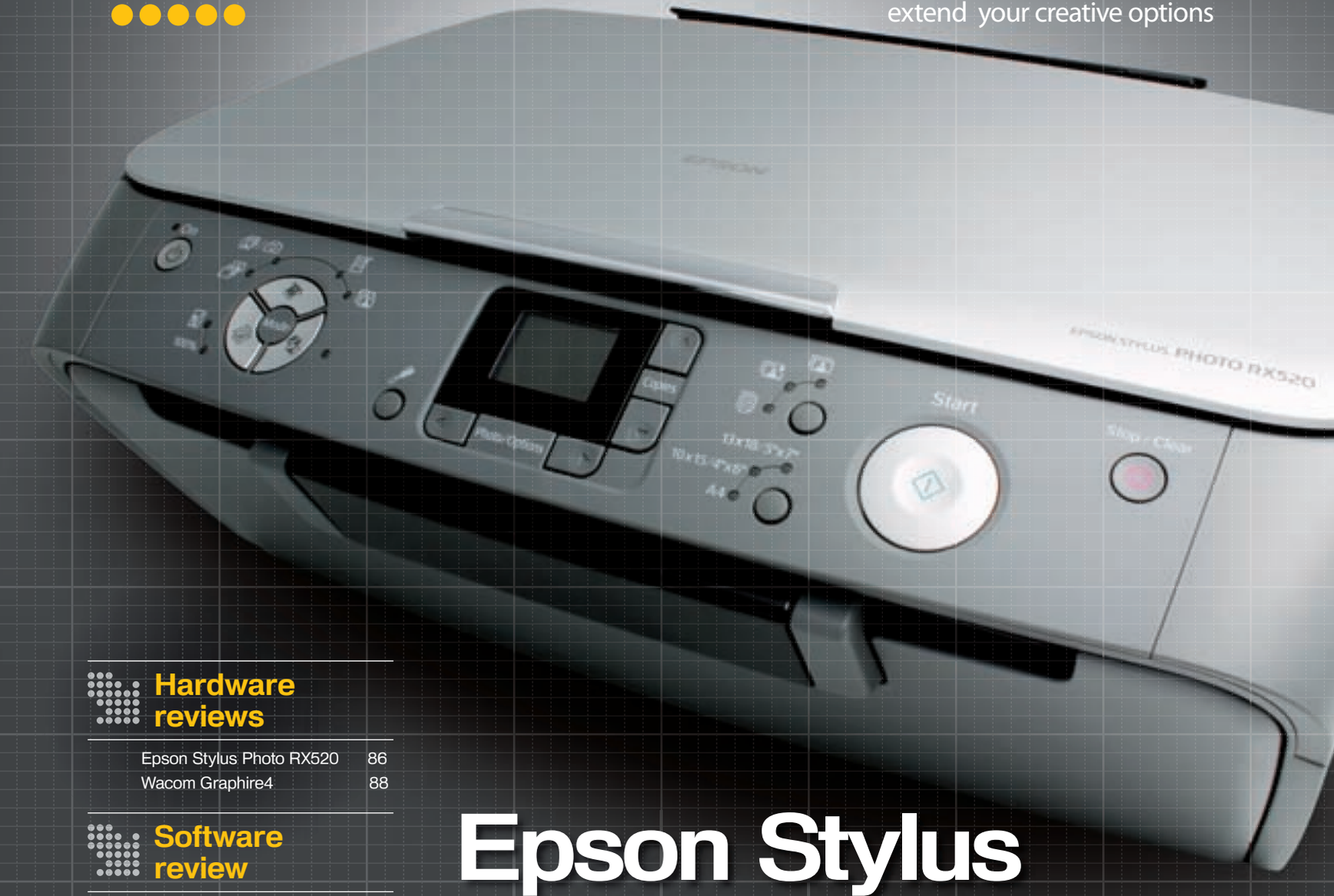
http://fotofects.com

Yum yum, more Photoshop tutorials to devour. But it's not just Photoshop users who reap the rewards from this site – anyone who has Photoshop Elements as their image editor of choice will find a lovely section just for them. Plus there's more – it's also good for photographers because, you guessed it, there's a lovely section just for them too. In addition to having an impressive range of tutorials, the quality of instruction is very good, with everything clearly explained and lots of lovely clear images to demonstrate exactly what is going on. The tutorials are arranged by category, so you don't have to spend ages wading through pages to get to what you like. One thing we should also point out is that the site has an excellent feeling of community, with a good Forum section and a Stock Photos area where members upload their photos for people to download.

eMag™

creative reviews

This is the place to come for a closer look at the best hardware and software to extend your creative options



Hardware reviews

Epson Stylus Photo RX520 86
Wacom Graphire4 88

Software review

Vertus Fluid Mask 89

Book reviews

Digital Illustration 90
Color Management 91
Photoshop CS2 Killer Tips 91
Painter IX Wow! Book 91

Epson Stylus Photo RX520

"The RX520 allows you to get sparkling printouts without even touching a computer"

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HARDWARE

info

COMPANY
Epson

WEB
www.epson.co.uk

PRICE
£149

OPERATING SYSTEM
PC and Mac

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 98 SE and above
Pentium III 1GHz and above
Mac OS 9.1 and above
PowerPC G4 700MHz and above

Epson Stylus Photo RX520

Does this all-in-one model fall into the 'jack of all trades, master of none' trap? We devised some tests to find out

If you have a computer and Photoshop, it pretty much follows that at some stage you're going to want a printer. So you go out and buy a printer. Then as your Photoshop skills improve, you might toy with the idea of buying a scanner. So you go out and buy a scanner. You now have the equipment to do pretty much anything, but your desk is overrun with wires and there's not a spare USB port in sight. Go the all-in-one route, however, and you get all this functionality in one unit. We tested the Epson Stylus Photo RX520 to see if it's the answer to cluttered desk syndrome.

THE RX520 UP CLOSE

What this all-in-one can do for you…

The obvious boon to an all-in-one unit is that everything you need is within easy reach. Just one plug and one USB cable will give you access to scanning, printing and copying features. The RX520 is particularly well-designed, with pleasing nooks and crannies for all the functions

No computer, no cry
The buttons and LCD screen means that you can print and copy photos or transparencies without turning on the computer.

Memory test
You can slot your memory card straight into the RX520 and print out your photos, or even plug the camera straight into the USB port.

Separation is good
The separate ink cartridges mean you only have to replace colours as they run out – much more economical and environmentally friendly!

There's certainly no missing the RX520 – it's rectangular and big, although it does have some nice angles so at least it isn't an eyesore. The front has a panel where you choose the different modes and settings, and the bottom front drops down for accessing the printouts. This is also where you access memory card slots for direct printing from your camera.

Setting up takes about half an hour, which includes installing the software and initialising the ink cartridges. And on the subject of print cartridges, the RX520 takes four of them, which means you replace just the ones you need to. Printing is a simple process. Open up your image in Photoshop, make sure your settings are correct and then hit print. When printing, you get an output of around 5760dpi; in other words bloody nice printouts. The maximum printing area is A4 but you can also print to envelopes. We tried printing an A4 piece of art, which was laden with effects and it took about two minutes. However, the results looked like it took much longer. Colours were rich and accurate, and the whole result looked very professional. Printing to 4 x 6 photo paper took under a minute, and the results were just as impressive. You could easily print out your holiday snaps in the time it takes to make a cup of coffee.

As a scanner, the RX520 offers 1200 x 2400dpi capabilities, which is more than enough for the average home user. The finished scans are impressive, with the option to automatically clean up dust or restore colour to old photos. On the whole this worked well, although you still can't beat a good blast of Photoshop magic.

One feature that will score big with photo retouching fans is the ability to scan in transparencies and negatives. There's a special holder to keep the transparencies in place and once they're scanned, you have the option to either print straight off or import into Photoshop. If you have loads of old photos, this is the perfect way to store them digitally.

As is typical with most printers these days, The RX520 allows you to get sparkling printouts without even touching a computer. For digital photos, you can hook up a camera or insert your memory card. You then use the LCD monitor on the front panel to navigate through the options and print away. You can also scan photos and documents to print and even apply colour restoration. We tried scanning an old photo with this feature enabled and the result was pretty good. The RX520 turned a yellow photo into a crisp black-and-white printout. Again, a quick and painless way of preserving old photos.

We got on very well with the RX520. Printouts were superb, output time was quick and operation noise was minimal. Scanning was equally impressive – again the quality was everything you could hope for and the software offered lots of options for manual control. Okay, so it's a bit of a beast in the size stakes, but it looks very professional, especially when the LCD screen is zipping through its options. We'd definitely recommend this one.

THE PHOTO STYLUS RX520

It can look a bit of a chunky monkey on small desks, but this all-in-one is packing a printer, scanner and copier into its frame. The front panel gives control over your computer-independent activities

Paper and quality You tell the RX520 what paper size you are using as well as the quality of the printout you want using these buttons here.

Scanning and printing These buttons here allow you to scan and print photos and paper documents. You can also control the copying functions.

> "ONE FEATURE THAT WILL SCORE BIG WITH PHOTO RETOUCHING FANS IS THE ABILITY TO SCAN IN TRANSPARENCIES AND NEGATIVES"

You can scan
The scanner is easy to use and comes with a device for scanning prints and negatives, which is great for archiving old photo collections.

Preview options
The LCD screen is small but it's more than enough for previewing scans, selecting images and setting up print options.

Paper feed
The RX520 will print up to A4, but the slider means that you can use other sizes without the paper flopping around.

PROS

- Excellent quality of output
- Quick and quiet operation
- Professional feel and good quality
- Quick start-up time means you don't miss the action

CONS

- It's a bit of a beast in size
- No USB cable supplied

VERDICT

9.0

An excellent machine for the home user looking for quality results without paying an insane price tag

HARDWARE

Digital photographers can take their first step on the graphics tablet ladder with Wacom's new Graphire4 range

Wacom Graphire4 Studio

info

COMPANY
Wacom

WEB
www.wacom.com

PRICE
Graphire4 Classic: £74.99
Graphire4 Classic XL: £149.99
Graphire4 Studio: £109.99
Graphire4 Studio XL: £179.99

OPERATING SYSTEMS
PC and Mac

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 98 and above
Mac OS X 10.2.8 or higher

PROS
- Has a professional look about it
- Doesn't break the bank
- Really easy to use and configure

CONS
- The pen nib feels a little scratchy, but that's nothing major

VERDICT

9.5

Perfect for anyone who has been thinking about getting a tablet but without spending lots of money

Finger clickin' good
The two buttons on the pen allow you to single and double-click without reaching for the mouse.
Scroll and click
The scroll wheel at the top of the tablet lets you easily navigate around documents and applications.
WACOM

Wacom has long ruled the graphics tablet roost and has captured the hearts of creative professionals and serious hobbyists with its Intuos range. But you may not know that it also has an entry-level collection in the shape of its Graphire range, the latest of which we test here.

Now, the term 'entry-level' usually means that you have to suffer a medley of imperfections all in the name of saving money. It might be that the build quality is a little flimsy or the features are a tad on the scrimpy side. So we were delighted to find out that the Graphire4 bucked this tradition by being an exceptional product that also happens to come with an affordable price tag.

There are two sizes of tablet to choose from – A6 and A5, and you can pick from Classic (A6 or A5), Studio (A6) or Studio XL (A5). Open up the Graphire4 box and you'll find a pen, tablet and Corel Painter Essentials 2 software. If you pay the extra for the Studio options you'll also get Photoshop Elements 3.0 and nik Color Efex Pro 2.0 Standard – a plug-in for Photoshop that offers photographic filters.

We tested the Studio tablet, and were really impressed with it. We use the Intuos3 range in the office, so were interested to see how the cheaper Graphire performed. Looks-wise, it's a winner. Boasting a sophisticated brushed silver plumage, it certainly looks the part. At the top of the tablet is a scroll wheel that lets you zoom in and out of documents. This is flagged either side by buttons that can be set to your particular brand of modifier key. The scroll wheel is a really nice touch and means you can zoom in and out of a document easily. We set the buttons to the Option and Apple keys and found we could pretty much move the keyboard to one side and just use the tablet.

First-time users will undoubtedly find the whole experience of using a tablet a bit odd, but any teething problems are minimised by the excellent design of the product. The pen is easy to hold – it doesn't feel quite as luxurious as the Intuos' Grip Pen, but costs have to be cut somewhere. It's about the same size as one of those squidgy rollerball pens and there are two buttons on the shaft; one for double-click and one for single-click. The Graphire comes with 512 levels of pressure, so you can set up Photoshop's brushes to respond to how hard you press the pen. You also get a handy eraser on the tip of the pen, which allows for swift correction of wayward strokes.

Even going for the smallest tablet – the A6 we tested here – you still have full control over the entire screen. You can map the tablet to your monitor, which means you can do a broad stroke that covers the entire screen area.

As an entry-level tablet, the Graphire4 is excellent. For £74.99 you can get an A6 tablet that will allow you to perform all manner of creative tricks. Even if you only do the odd bit of photo editing, it's still worth buying for the control it gives. If you've been toying with the idea of getting a graphics tablet, you need think no more. Go out and buy this!

GRAPHIRE4'S KILLER FEATURES

Reasons for you to buy

Easy click The two buttons on the pen allow you to perform a double-click or single-click without having to move the nib.

Taking a scroll The scroll wheel lets you zoom in and out of a document, which is perfect for getting in close to photos when editing.

Tablet area Even with the smallest tablet, you can still get to the entire monitor area so there's no compromise over your creativity.

Gone forever The pen has an eraser at the top. Simply rub this over the tablet, just as if it were a real eraser, to swiftly delete any mistakes.

SOFTWARE

Tools of the trade Use these tools to decide which areas to keep and which areas to delete, plus test render as you go.

Size it up You can adjust the size of the keep and delete tools from here, as well as make other adjustments to the cut out process.

info

COMPANY
Vertus

WEB
www.vertustech.com

PRICE
£179

OPERATING SYSTEM
Mac and PC

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Mac: OS X 10.2.8, 833MHz G4

PC: Windows 2000, 750MHz or higher

Fluid Mask

What's this? A plug-in that claims to deliver superior cutouts on even the trickiest of objects? How could we resist…

DETAILS
The core of cutouts

Make it work With images that have similar colours, you can use the Force Edge tool to create a clear divide between what to keep and what to delete.

Get the colours Complex cutouts will call for the Region Editor, which allows you to pick the colours to keep or dispose of. This is an accurate way of working.

Hairy details Cutting out hair is much easier with Fluid Mask, so you don't have to spend ages trying to get convincing edges with the Pen tool.

Test render To see how your masking is going, use the Test Render tool to draw around an area and see how it will look cut out.

Before you get your hopes up, we need to clarify one thing – Fluid Mask is not a one-click wonder tool. You're not going to be able to take an incredibly complex photo and produce a crisp cutout in seconds, which, if we're honest, is exactly what we were hoping for. To get the most from Fluid Mask you do need to spend some time learning what everything does, but once you get the hang of it, complex cut outs aren't such an uphill struggle.

Fluid Mask, like most plug-ins, has its own interface with its own tools and menus. The basic cutting out works on a principle of deciding what to keep and what to delete. The actual selection criteria is pretty much like Photoshop's Magic Wand – you click on a bit of the image to locate pixels of the same colour. To make the basic selections there are three tools – Exact, Local and Global – for both the keep and delete commands. The Exact tool masks only the pixels you click on; the Local tools mask only pixels in the immediate area that are the same colour as the ones you've selected; and Global will mask all pixels that are the same colour as the ones you've picked. You can change the size of these tools from the floating Tool Options window according to how big the area you want to select is. These tools are very easy to use; all it takes is a click or a swoop to mask the pixels.

For trickier scenarios, pay a visit to the Region Editor. This allows you to pinpoint fiddly pixels that were missed in the first masking. It works by displaying tiny colour squares of all the hues in that area – just click the ones to keep or delete. This was our favourite way of making masks because it's easy to see exactly which colours don't belong and saves having to try and manually select the offending pixels.

So how different is Fluid Mask to Photoshop's own selection tools? We tried cutting out the owl photo you see above in both Fluid Mask and Photoshop. Fluid Mask just pipped Photoshop at the post – the background had similar colours to the owl's feathers and Photoshop's Magic Wand and Select Color command both had difficulty. Fluid Mask also initially picked up both foreground and background, but swift dose of the Region Editor sorted it out.

Although Fluid Mask isn't a one-click answer for horrendously complicated cutouts, its way of working soon becomes second nature. If you fancy seeing for yourself how it performs, enter our Readers' Challenge on page 98 for a chance to win a copy.

PROS

- Even the basic selections are impressive
- Region Editor means you can cut out objects that you would never have touched before

CONS

- It takes a bit of time to get used to
- Can chug on slower machines

VERDICT

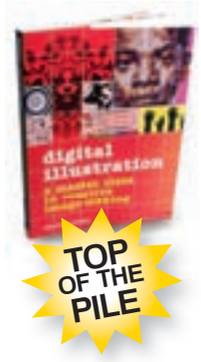
8.5

- Once you get used to how it works, Fluid Mask is a straightforward tool for cutout fanatics

BOOKS

Digital Illustration

Get to grips with the whole gamut of digital illustration with this title



We like books like this very much. Not only does it have lots of sumptuous examples of digital art, but it offers behind-the-scene guides to how the pieces were created. The book begins with a look at how digital illustration began, tagging the artists that used digital technologies to create beautiful and vibrant pieces of work. Author Lawrence Zeegan covers all sorts of digital illustration, including mixed media, sketch effects and photo graphics. Zeegan profiles artists working within each of these disciplines, giving examples of their work, getting their thoughts on the particular field they work in, and then gets an artist to produce a tutorial. The last chunk of the book looks at the business side of the digital creative industry, from self-promotion, working to commissions, deciding whether to use an agent and sorting out that all-important portfolio.

As a roundup of the biggest and most exciting names in the world of digital illustration, this book performs very well. However, *Digital Illustration* avoids being mere eye candy because it is also packed with practical advice. Whether this comes from the professionals talking about their experiences in the design world, or the step-by-step tutorials, there's plenty for the aspiring artist to get excited about. True, not every piece of work featured was created using the Photoshop software, but there's plenty to sink your teeth into anyway.

info

AUTHOR
Lawrence Zeegan

PRICE
£20.00

PUBLISHER
RotoVision

ISBN
2-88046-797-7

Colour wonder The book is festooned with colour pictures, which clearly demonstrate the points being made.

Introduce yourself Each section of the book serves as an introduction to that particular brand of design.

DIVING INTO DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION

Inside the covers…

Examples galore Each page of *Digital Illustration* is stuffed with colour examples of whatever style is being discussed.

Profiles The Profile sections of the book give a tantalising insight into how professional artists go about doing what they do.

Learn from the experts The tutorials are perfect for taking your first steps in a particular style and the step-by-step format is easy to follow.

Professional advice There's loads of helpful guidance in the book for anyone who fancies becoming a professional designer.

Lots of style Readers won't be disappointed with the cross-section of different artists and styles in the various chapters.

NOTES | LET US KNOW IF THERE'S A PHOTOSHOP BOOK YOU'D LIKE US TO REVIEW – JUST EMAIL PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

Color Management

Get closer to the colour management prize with the aid of this book

info

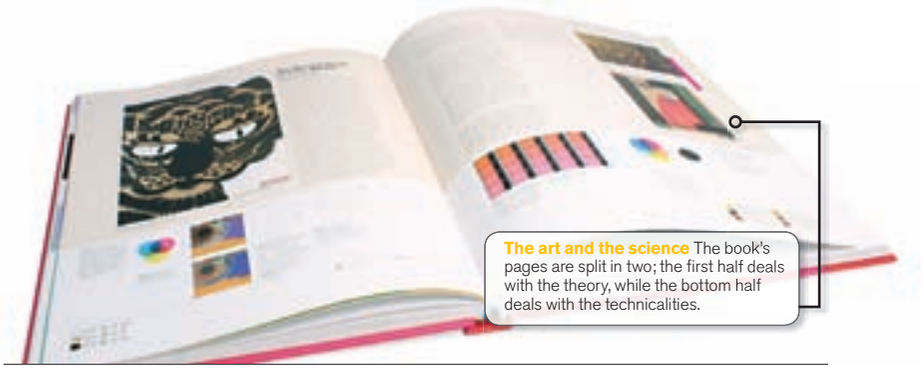
AUTHOR
John T Drew and Sarah A Meyer

PRICE
£25.00

PUBLISHER
RotoVision

ISBN
2-88046-819-1

Whatever your level of editing, colour plays a pivotal role in the success of an image. Whether you're performing a simple photo tweak or about to embark on an elaborate Photoshop file that is dripping with layers and effects, colour draws the viewer into an image and if used well, will provoke emotion. This book aims to provide all you need for using colour both on practical and more emotional levels. For the practical side of things, you will learn what colours work well together, what combinations are best for text and backgrounds and which combinations should be avoided like the plague. On an emotional level, you get to find out how different colours affect the mood of people. You also get to learn the history behind tools such as colour wheels, and the accompanying CD has a handy 10,000 hue swatch system to help you pick the perfect colour. There are loads of images to demonstrate the points being made, complete with the colour values to try in your own work.



The art and the science The book's pages are split in two; the first half deals with the theory, while the bottom half deals with the technicalities.

GET CLOSER TO COLOUR

What's in store for you

Terms of the trade The book kicks off with a look at the different colour terminology and how it's used.

Type fit The sections that deal with colour and text will help ensure that you never fall foul of clashing hues.

Professional printing The book also deals with professional printing and how to ensure colours print as they should.

Feeling blue The final part of the book is dedicated to the emotional associations of certain colours.

The Painter IX Wow! Book

Extend your natural media prowess with these tips and advice

info

AUTHOR
Cher Threinen-Pendarvis

PRICE
£35.99

PUBLISHER
Peachpit Press

ISBN
0-321-30532-9

Gawd bless the Wow! books. These little beauties manage to get to the heart of a program and give you all the information you need to get the most from a piece of software. If you enjoyed our trip into the Painter world last issue but would like a bit more instruction in how it all works, this is THE book you need. It starts off at a leisurely pace, giving you an overview of the essentials such as saving files, opening files and managing your workflow. Then the chapters move into the real meat of the program, covering subjects such as adjusting colour, using the brushes, playing with selections and masks, using layers, working with Painter and Photoshop and even how to animate with the program. Each page is packed with tips, annotations, and colour examples and there is a barrage of inspirational tutorials to turn that knowledge into something practical. Professional Painter users also share their secrets on how they use the program, and these profiles round off each chapter to really hammer home how versatile the program is. And the icing on the cake is the CD. On this you'll find loads of resources such as stock photos, video clips, custom brushes and lighting effects. All in all, it's an essential buy for curious Painter fans.

Photoshop CS2 Killer Tips

Plenty of help for shaking off Photoshop tardiness

info

AUTHORS
Scott Kelby and Felix Nelson

PRICE
£21.99

PUBLISHER
New Riders

ISBN
0-321-33063-3

Anyone who's familiar with Scott Kelby or the 'Killer Tips' series will know what to expect from this book – pages and pages of helpful tips. These cover topics such as layers, type, Camera Raw and general guidance for turning a chugging Photoshop workflow into greased lightning. But it's not just the quality of tips that makes this such a good book. The writing style is a joy to read, managing to straddle that difficult bridge between humour and instruction. In fact, although the book works on a dipping in and out basis, you'll probably find you end up reading it chapter by chapter just because it's so enjoyable. Each tip comes with a nice colour screenshot to prove its point, and the text is kept quite short so you don't waste time wading through lots of waffle. Obviously this is tailored to CS2, but there's still lots to learn if you have older versions of the software. In short, if you want no-nonsense advice on speeding up your use of the Photoshop software, this is the book for you.

Enter our challenge and see your work in the magazine!

HOW TO ENTER

Go to the Readers' Challenge folder on the free CD-ROM to access this challenge's images. Once you've completed your masterpiece, send it to us on a CD, along with your name, address, and a few words about what you've created, to:

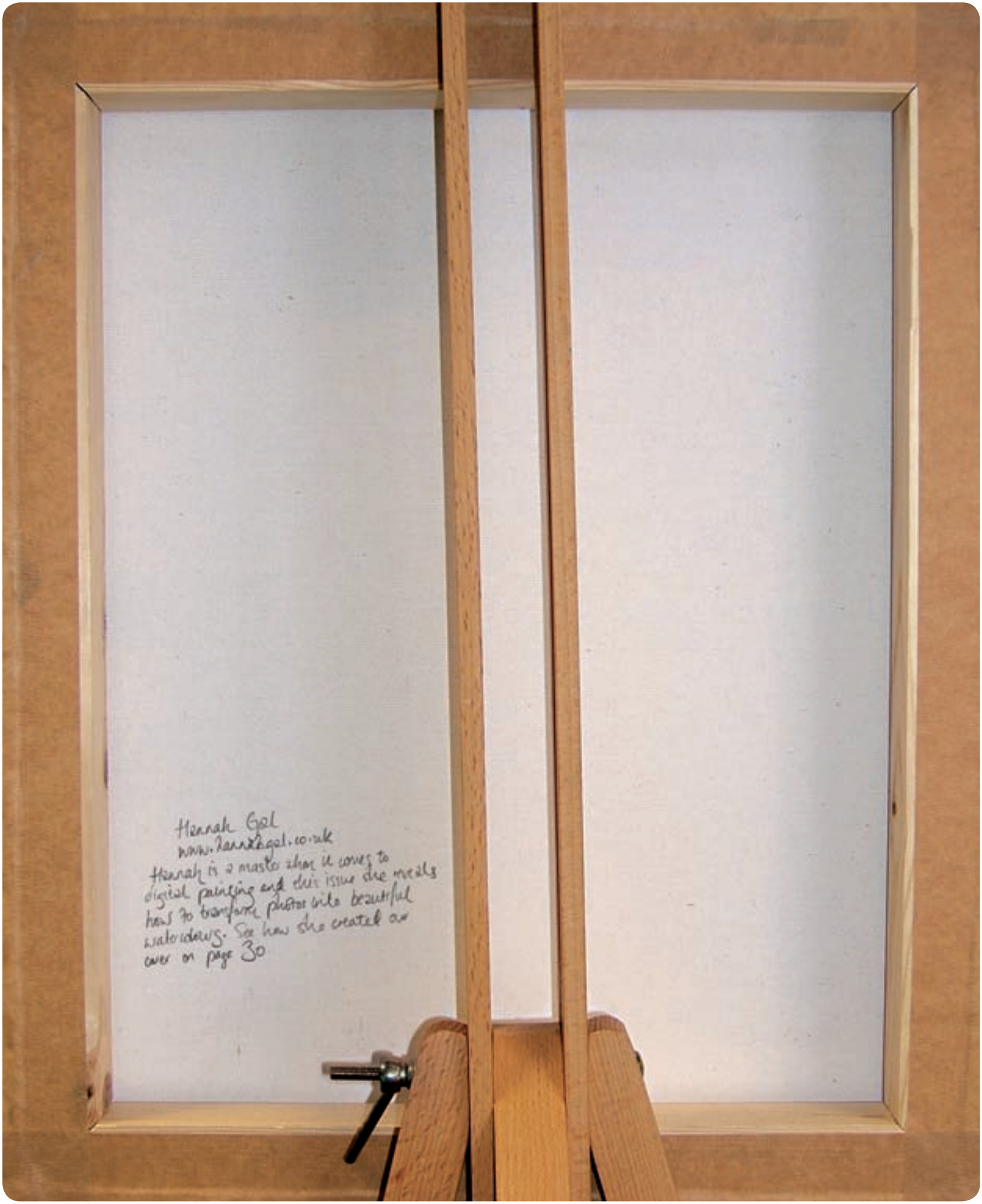
Readers' Challenge
Photoshop Creative
Imagine Publishing
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset, UK
BH2 6EQ

Readers' Challenge

Another task to exercise your image-editing brain cells

On many art courses, there will be a module where the students have to work with a limited palette. This can be a limited amount of materials, a limited choice of colours or a limited amount of time. The idea is that by imposing restrictions, the student is forced to stop faffing about with hundreds of possibilities and instead hone their focus. We've taken a similar approach with this issue's Readers' Challenge. There are three pictures in the Challenge folder on the magazine's CD-ROM and it's up to you to transform them into something spectacular. For one idea of how to treat them, turn to page 42 and see how Kev Speck took the images and turned them into a vector illustration. Of course, you don't have to follow that theme. Do whatever you fancy – the point is to have fun and let us see the results! We'll feature the best entries in the Exhibit pages and each month the overall winner will win a copy of the Fluid Mask plug-in.

NOTES | IF YOUR ENTRY IS UNDER 2MB, YOU CAN EMAIL IT TO US AT PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK


Hannah Gal
www.hannahgal.co.uk
Hannah is a master when it comes to
digital painting and this issue she reveals
how to transform photos into beautiful
watercolours. See how she created our
cover on page 30